ART OF OVER THE GARDEN WALL.™

WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY BY

SEAN EDGAR AND
PATRICK McHALE

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OVER THE
GARDEN WALL

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Opposite: Jim Campbell

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Painting: Nick Cross. Opposite: Jim Campbell

INTRODUCTION

Like many people upon encountering *Over the Garden Wall*, Rob Sorcher was confused. "I don't understand this," the executive vice president of Cartoon Network told Patrick McHale, glancing over the project's storyboards.

The art showed two half brothers exploring a haunting dream world that was a cross between a Germanic fairy tale and colonial America. The older brother, Wirt, wears a pointy red gnome hat and a Civil War–era cape. He fusses, bumbles, and recites romantic poetry as he searches for a way home. His younger brother, Greg, sports green overalls, wears an upside-down teapot on his head, and consults a companion frog (called Kitty, Jason Funderburker, Doctor Cucumber, or any number of other names). And like the audience, Wirt and Greg are mystified as to how they arrived in *Over the Garden Wall*'s spooky wonderland.

McHale assured Sorcher that the story would "generally make sense" and that the script would "generally be funny." It would also look beautiful, because animation veteran Nick Cross was the art director.

"It's going to be fine," McHale told Sorcher. "It's not going to be terrible. Even if it's not great, it'll be good."

"That's a good point," Sorcher said. "I don't understand what this is . . . but *keep going*."

When *Over the Garden Wall* aired on Cartoon Network over five consecutive days in early November 2014, it surpassed McHale's projection of "not terrible." The miniseries proved layered and ambitious, packing its ten-minute episodes with more plot, characters, and twists than many cartoons deliver in a full season. Audiences untangled the clues of trapped souls and horrific beasts, discovering the mysteries of the Unknown alongside Wirt and Greg.

And the art was intoxicating. Cross and McHale led a small army of artists that pulled from the painterly lineage of the Hudson River School, Gustave Doré, Edward Lear, José Guadalupe Posada, and countless others to create an aesthetic that was both timeless and unique. The team had to switch animation studios because the backgrounds were so dense and elaborate that it was difficult to find artists able to work on the show. But this cartoon wasn't concerned with modernism. McHale referenced and shared a file packed with Victorian chromolithography, vintage Halloween postcards, magic lantern slides, and photographs of New England foliage. Series character designer and Pilot creative director Phil Rynda modeled his mouth charts off the fluid 1930s cartoons produced by Disney and Fleischer Studios. It was an obsessive cartoon, constructed on a foundation of influences centuries old, and magic hid between its frames.

Critics appreciated the unconventional tactics adopted by McHale, Cross, Rynda, and the rest of the *Over the Garden Wall* team. Among many other accolades, the miniseries won four Emmys in 2015. In celebration, Sorcher cut cake at the Cartoon Network studio and recounted his conversation with McHale. "When I had my doubts about the show, Pat said, 'Don't worry; it's going to be amazing!' "

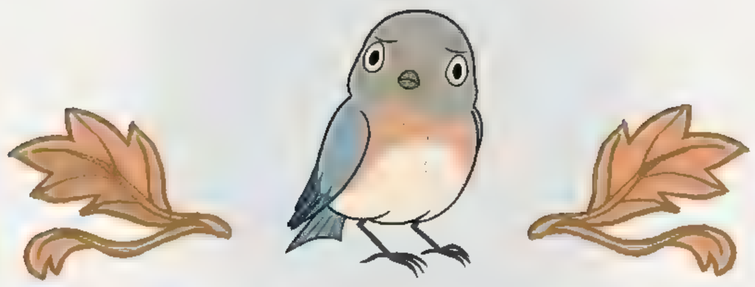
McHale stammered in reply, "No, no, that's not what I said. I didn't say it was going to be amazing . . . I just said it was going to be at least decent."

This is the story of the creation of one of the most at-least-decent animation masterpieces of the twenty-first century.

Character Design: Patrick McHale, Phil Rynda
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Nick Cross
Art Direction: Susan Mondt

Patrick McHale: This is the pencil art for the image that really helped sell the show. None of the other art I'd done up until this point really showed what the world was like. Because Wirt started off as more of a scaredy-cat character, I just put three scary things into the image to get the point across. I'm not a great designer, but the bat, jack-o'-lantern, and skeleton made it feel "Halloweeny" enough. I think that added enough visual interest that I thought, oh, this is what the show's going to feel like . . . even if it's not what the show will actually look like.

Sketch: Patrick McHale



"I DON'T KNOW HOW THIS SHOW GOT MADE."

—Nick Cross, Art Director

In 2002, Patrick McHale flew to Los Angeles to attend the Character Animation program at the California Institute of the Arts. He arrived during the longest dry spell the city had witnessed in its 152-year history. For ninety-nine days from June to September, rain clouds refused to visit the SoCal metropolis.

Two years earlier, the New Jersey native had gotten serious about the art of moving pictures after watching the 1921 cartoon short *The Flying House*. This eleven-minute production, courtesy of *Little Nemo* mastermind and animation pioneer Winsor McCay, follows a married couple as they pilot a suburban home into a piston-pumping aircraft. In an effort to evade creditors, the pair fly into outer space, where they narrowly escape a titan with a fly swatter. In the final scene, McCay reveals that the fanciful scenario was the wife's dream.

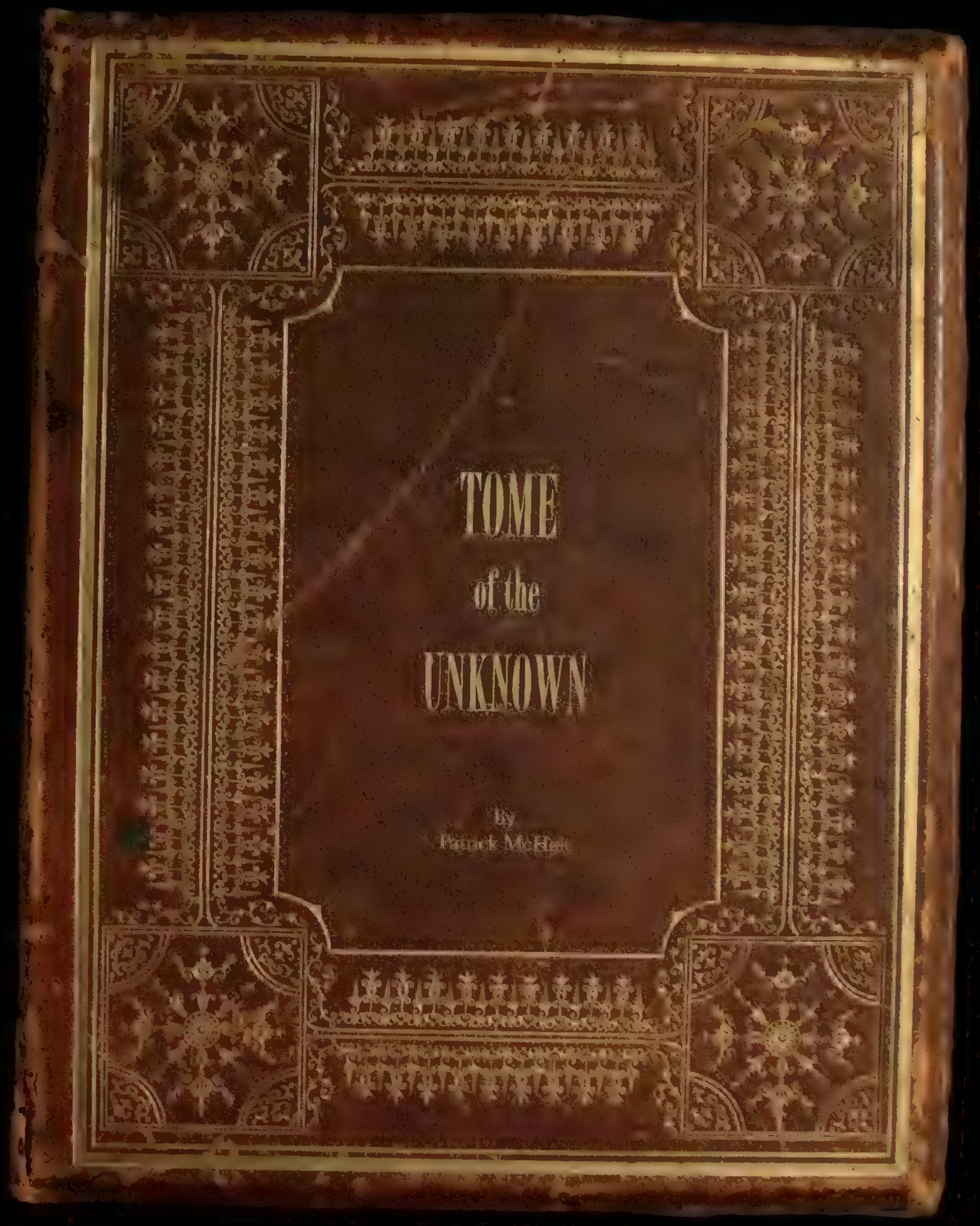
He saw the short on Classic Arts Showcase, a multimedia smorgasbord shown on public access stations. The programming featured film, animation, ballet, puppetry, dolls, and beyond. Instead of sleeping at night, McHale watched material like this that fed a growing love of silent film and opera—two huge influences on *Over the Garden Wall.* He cultivated a love of anything antique or vintage, constantly searching for hidden gems floating around the public domain.

All of these pieces made their way, one way or another, into *Over the Garden Wall.* But it was the California dry spell that led McHale to the town that planted the seed for *Over the Garden Wall.* Bummed out by SoCal's arid climate and "lack of ghosts," the college sophomore traveled to Concord, Massachusetts. Surrounded by candlelit taverns, golden meadows, and the spirits of famous poets, he absorbed the region's potent history.

The 1775 skirmish that ignited the Revolutionary War took place within Concord's borders, as militiamen repelled British troops during the Battles of Lexington and Concord. Transcendentalist poet Henry David Thoreau lived near the town as he penned the 1894 naturalist opus *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*. Concord citizen Nathaniel Hawthorne's creepy short story about the devil, "Young Goodman Brown," heavily influenced the Beast, the soul-feasting villain in *Over the Garden Wall.*

The colonial farms and architecture of Concord bled directly into the visual DNA of the cartoon. That sheer sense of place ingrained itself in McHale's imagination, and stayed long after he returned to school.

PM: I definitely felt there weren't enough ghosts in LA. It was nice to be around old houses. I felt more at home.



PM: I used this as the cover of my pitch bible for Tome of the Unknown. I just took an old book I had and Photoshopped text onto it. I don't remember what book it was, and now I can't find it. Maybe it's gone forever.

A pitch bible is a document used to convince a network to make your show. It tells the reader what the show is about, describes the main characters, shows what the series might look and feel like visually, suggests possible stories for episodes, and more. You want a network to read your pitch bible and think, "Boy, I wish this was a real show."

Art: Patrick McHale

THE PITCH

In September 2006, McHale pitched two projects to Cartoon Network: *Space Planet*, a quirky cosmic opera with deeper philosophical themes, and *Tome of the Unknown*. For the latter, McHale constructed an intricate bible with pencil illustrations and paper cuts created with a pair of scissors bought from the local Staples.

The *Tome of the Unknown* pitch contained the loose premise of *Over the Garden Wall*, but with a few key differences. The story revolves around two half brothers—Gregory and Walter—who accidentally board a train destined for the afterlife. After the conductor removes his face to reveal a skeleton, Gregory and Walter jump from the train midjourney. They wander into a forest, where they encounter a devil named Old Scratch, who tricks Gregory into a Faustian deal: Scratch promises to return them home if they read a book of forgotten stories—the Tome of the Unknown. If the duo fail, they'll be whisked away to "live in the dark kingdom forever." Walter initially protests, but he adds his signature to the contract when he realizes Gregory has already signed.

Old Scratch then grabs the book and tears out all the pages, flinging them into the air as otherworldly winds carry the sheets to the far corners of the Land of the In-Between, the floating pages reminiscent of autumn leaves. The episodes follow Gregory and Walter as they track down the pages, with events from the stories coming to life in unexpected ways.

These first iterations of Gregory and Walter were largely consistent with their versions that appear in *Over the Garden Wall*. The seeds of other characters also emerged from this proposal. Beatrice makes her debut as an enchanted sparrow that Gregory frees from a thornbush. After a series of tweaks, Old Scratch transformed from a literal devil to the more primal Beast (this evolution also appeased any corporate parties concerned about including a variation of the Judeo-Christian devil in a kids' show). Gregory's pet frog has a confirmed alias: Polly Wee (after the Leadbelly song).

The 2006 pitch also formalized the unique blend of styles, inspired by Concord, which would define the pilot and miniseries. McHale described the Land of the In-Between as "the place between life and death, dreams and reality. Culturally it is a mixture of American folklore, classic fairy tales, ghost stories, and dreamland.

Walter portrait from the 2006 bible.

PM: I had been learning about Hans Christian Andersen, and how he would often do paper cutting while telling his stories. By the end of the story, he'd have a beautiful little paper-cut work to reveal to his audience. I got into doing paper cutting myself, and wanted to include it somehow in the series. Walter, the proto-Wirt, was obsessed with cutting paper.

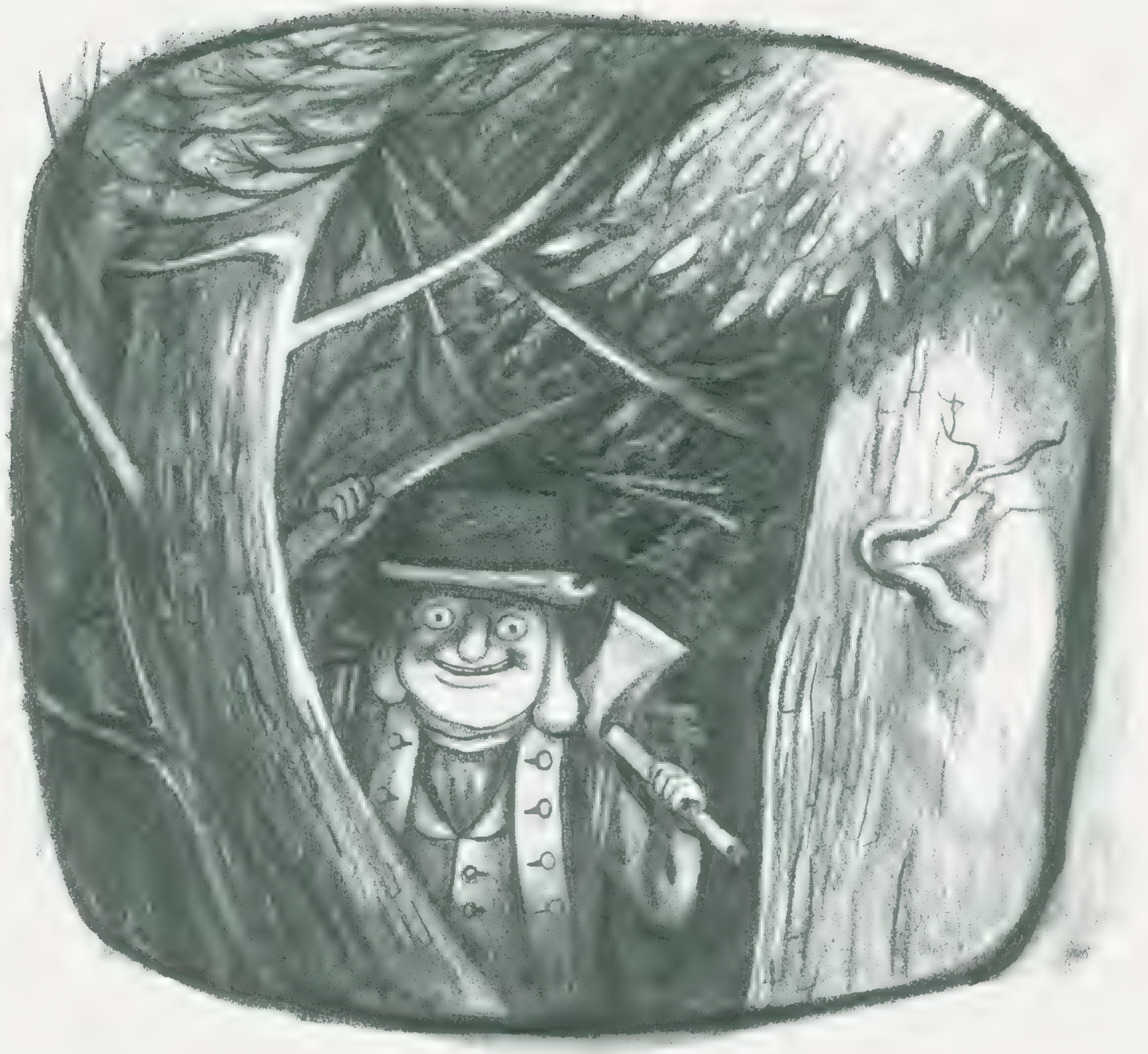
The landscape is never-ending and always changing, but usually has the feel of either Colonial-to-Victorian New England or a German countryside."

During that meeting, Cartoon Network expressed interest in both of McHale's proposals. They optioned *Space Planet* for an eleven-minute pilot and requested a new pitch of *Tome of the Unknown*, restructured as a motion picture for the channel's fledgling feature film department.

McHale found it difficult to remold his story into a movie. "The way the story was structured earlier, it was about these pages of the book that the brothers are collecting," he said. "To make that into a movie just didn't fit." He was also uncertain how he could translate the organic, penciled feel of his bible pages into animation—a specialized department would be necessary for a visual strategy that unconventional. McHale decided not to repitch *Tome of the Unknown* as a film, and instead devoted his time exclusively to *Space Planet* and other Cartoon Network projects.

Between April and September 2007, McHale served as a storyboard artist and writer on *The Marvelous Misadventures of Flapjack*, contributing to ten episodes in the first season while he also plugged away on *Space Planet*. The next spring, Cartoon Network requested

PM: This iteration of the Woodsman on the right is based on a nightmarish dream I had. There was a storyteller telling stories to children, and as he told the stories they became true. The children saw amazing things, but eventually he told the story of how the children all followed him into the woods . . . so they did follow him into the woods, and then they disappeared forever.



that McHale shorten the *Space Planet* pilot from eleven to seven minutes to fit a new programming initiative called Cartoonstitute. He'd completed all the designs and storyboards for a full *Space Planet* pilot and dreaded having to cut four minutes out of the story. Instead, he decided to exit the development program and devote his energy and ideas to a new upcoming series: *Adventure Time*.

McHale joined Pendleton Ward—a fellow CalArts graduate and *Flapjack* veteran—to build a postapocalyptic fantasy featuring a boy, Finn, and his brother/dog, Jake. He served as creative director on the show's first two seasons between 2008 and 2010. Characters including the Lich and BMO (a holdover from *Space Planet*) were created or cocreated by McHale. He also directly inspired Party Pat, the fedora-and-cardigan-wearing leader of the Party Bears in the season 2 episode "Belly of the Beast."

Sketches and Storyboard: Patrick McHale

The artists behind *Flapjack* and *Adventure Time* would eventually compose the bulk of the talent that made the *Tome of the Unknown* pilot and *Over the Garden Wall* miniseries. Pen Ward and Cole Sanchez both got their start as storyboard artists on *Flapjack* and brought their talents to episodes 4 ("Songs of the Dark Lantern") and 9 ("Into the Unknown"), respectively. Susan Mondt, who painted backgrounds for *Adventure Time*, became art director for the *Tome of the Unknown* pilot. Phil Rynda, a character designer for *Adventure Time*, not only helped create the models for Wirt, Greg, the frog, and Beatrice, but also served as creative director on the pilot. *Adventure Time* storyboard supervisor Nate Cash took over creative direction for the first six episodes while writers and storyboard artists Bert Youn, Tom Herpich, Steve Wolfhard, Seo Kim, and Natasha Allegri all spent time in the Unknown.

Beatrice was initially designed as an envoy of the Woodsman, tasked to guard and guide Wirt and Greg through the dangers of the Unknown.

And the dangers of the Unknown are many. True to the Germanic fairy tales that influenced McHale, a few of the episodes offer horrific scenarios. Like Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm's bloody and morose nineteenth-century yarns, these episodes embrace a deep fear of predators lurking in the woods.

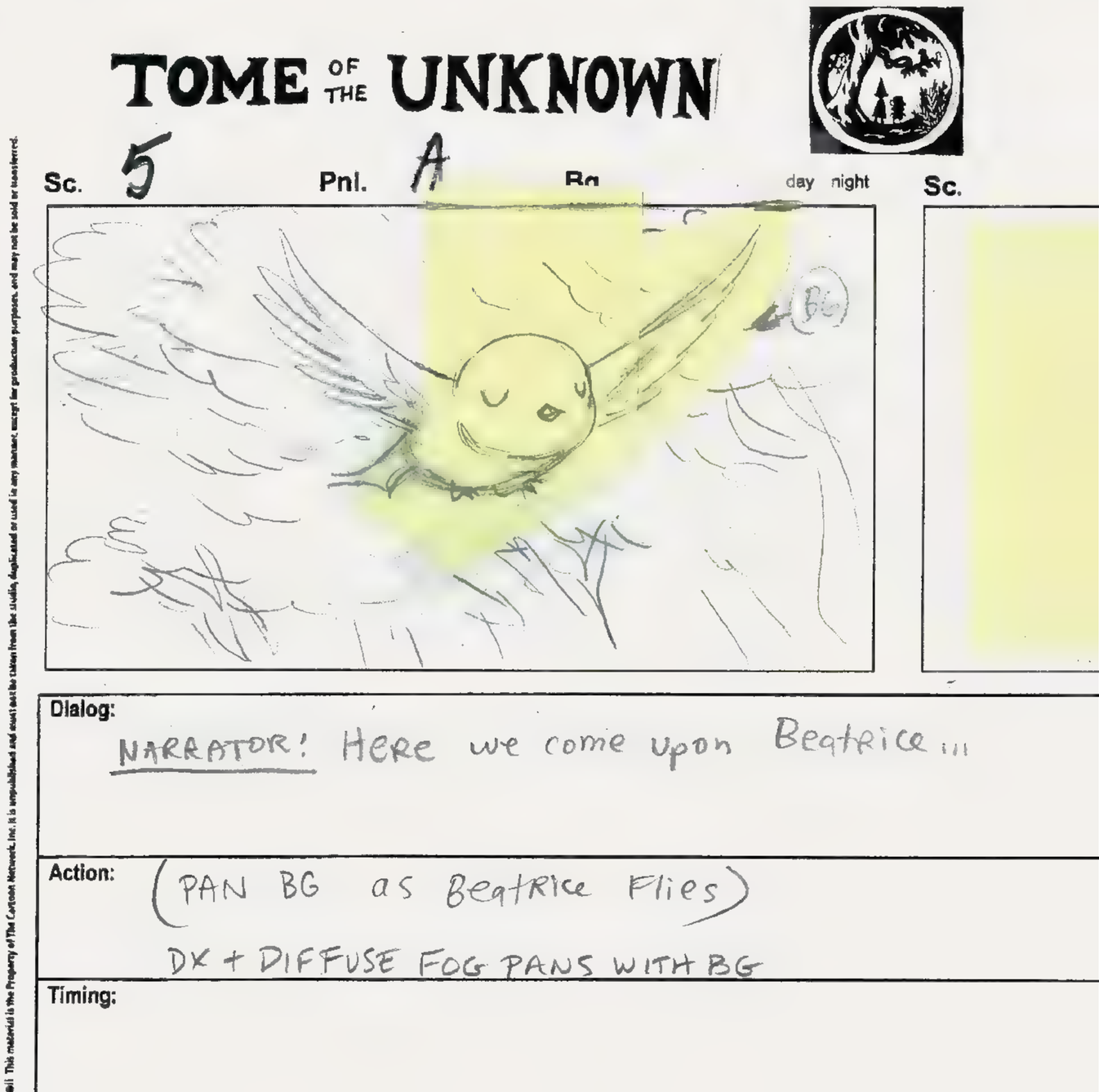
McHale also explores the more whimsical side of folklore through four episodes that show Wirt and Greg transformed into animals. Greg, in his sailor costume, is turned into a duck (potentially resembling a famous cartoon waterfowl), and Wirt "looks like either a bear or a dog . . . Nobody can tell which." That confusion is a reflection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century animal illustrations, which sometimes bore no resemblance to their flesh-and-blood sources.

The following pages present the 2012 *Tome of the Unknown* bible, as well as a collection of McHale's sketches that led to the final character designs.

PM: I like the design of this bear, copied from an old illustration. I've always been interested in how animals were drawn before there was so much photographic reference.

In 2010, McHale moved from Los Angeles to upstate New York, following his plan to spend no more than eight years in California. He continued to contribute to *Adventure Time* remotely, outlining episodes of the cartoon until its fifth season. Afterward, Cartoon Network reached out and asked if he would be interested in pitching a pilot. He viewed the opportunity as his "last chance to make a professional film," assuming his move away from the entertainment industry nerve center would lead to a career authoring children's books or delivering mail.

McHale updated his original 2006 pitch with new illustrations, descriptions, and a list of eleven story ideas. He also put more emphasis on two secondary characters: the Woodsman and Beatrice. Gruff, absent minded, and morally ambiguous, the Woodsman had a role in the Unknown that shifted many times throughout development. He was first envisioned as an agent of Old Scratch, and later took over as the sole villain of the series. He eventually became a misunderstood tragic wanderer, manipulated by evil forces but striving for redemption.



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Tome of the Unknown

ONCE there were two brothers named Wirt and Gregory. One Halloween night they accidentally took a ride on a little black train. They soon realized the train was headed straight for the afterlife, so they jumped off halfway.

Lost in the dark forest between life and death, they met the wise old Woodsman, who showed them a mysterious book detailing all of their future experiences in this strange place called "the Unknown." The only way for Wirt and Greg to escape, he explained, was for them to live out all the stories contained in the tome . . . otherwise they would be trapped in the Unknown forever.

Now, with the help of the Woodsman and a bluebird named Beatrice, Wirt and Greg must travel across the land completing each chapter of their story until they find their way home.

INTRODUCTION

<u>SHOW:</u> Tome of the Unknown is a comedy/horror/fantasy cartoon about two brothers trapped in a mysterious world, trying to find their way home. Think of it as a mixture of *Lost*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *The Storyteller* . . . but funny.

<u>EPISODES:</u> Each episode is a **standalone** short involving Wirt and Gregory attempting to survive a **strange, scary**, and/or classic **folktale**-type story. The stories will have funny characters, character-driven motivations, and surprise twists. I promise.

<u>STORY ARCS:</u> There are also various **multi-episode** story arcs, which will develop as the series progresses. Some would be smaller, like the set of episodes in which Wirt and Greg are transformed into animals. Some would be larger **overall series** story arcs, such as: What is the Woodsman's true nature (good or evil?) . . . and how will Wirt and Greg get home?

<u>MUSIC:</u> Music is important in the show; the soundtrack will be influenced by historically American-style music . . . ranging from Stephen Foster to the Stooges.

PM: I think this was one of my first sketches of Wirt that I liked. This was one of the first ones with a triangle nose.

PM: The style of the show was for characters to have button noses. But Wirt initially looked too much like a kid; he was too cutesy. I wanted to make him look a little bit older. I realized that no matter what I did, if he had a little circle nose, he looked too young. And if I gave him a big round nose, then he looked like an older man. I was trying to make him more like a teenager, so I gave him that triangle nose. It also reminded me of Raggedy Ann, which seemed like a nice nod.

Art: Patrick McHale

"WIRT"

Wirt is a thinker. In fact, he overthinks things. He'll analyze a problem until it's way more complicated than it should be. He's often seen just spacing out with a blank expression on his face, thinking deeply about . . . well . . . who knows?

He comes off as shy because he tries not to talk too much. The problem is . . . he tends to accidentally blurt out insulting or inappropriate things because he's not good at editing his thoughts. And the more he tries to backpedal, the deeper he digs his hole. This can be especially awkward for a young man trying to talk to girls. "No, no, I'm not saying your dress looks ugly . . . I just mean that you would look great if you weren't wearing it. Wait! No, I don't mean . . . ! Oh no . . ." So he ends up retreating back to his thoughts, analyzing what he could or should have said.

That said . . . when immediate danger threatens his brother Gregory, his intuition will usually kick in to help him make decisions more quickly.

TOO UGLY?
"I Im not Johnny allesead I Just a Pot
on my head!!
MushRoom
I'm small, But Safe.
WHAT this IS JUST the MONDAY BLUES
NOT iconic enough yet.

PM: Greg was a sailor in the bible, but there was concern about him looking too much like Flapjack. That pumpkin outfit was something I wore when I was little. The Johnny Appleseed one seemed good, but I wanted to make it a little more unique than that, so it didn't feel too derivative.

Art: Patrick McHale

PM: This sketch on the left was the first drawing of Greg in his final form. His hat looks more like a tea-cup with a little spout added to it, though. We had to fix that later.

"GREGORY"

Gregory is a doer. He's energetic, playful, and carefree . . . often to the point of being oblivious to serious danger. He likes to eat things (including, but not limited to, "food"), likes to touch things, likes making friends with strangers, and loves his pet frog.

He looks up to Wirt a great deal but doesn't really understand why his brother thinks and worries about stuff so much. Greg is hardly ever worried or scared (which can get him into all sorts of trouble).

He's usually easygoing, but that changes when he gets sleepy or hungry.

"R. Bliss"

R. Bliss is Gregory's pet bullfrog. He likes to hop on mushrooms and eat stuff (including, but not limited to, "food"). He sleeps in Gregory's hat.

Gregory is certain that R. Bliss is over two hundred years old, has a PhD in quantum mechanics, and would speak in a high-pitched British accent if he could talk. Wirt is undecided about these claims. So is R. Bliss.

"BEATRICE"

Beatrice is a girl cursed to be a bluebird, and she thinks it's awful. She has to eat bugs and worms because she can't digest real food. She obsessively makes nests, and other structures with twigs, even though she doesn't want to. And worst of all . . . she can't flip people off because she doesn't have hands.

The Woodsman stuck her with the task of helping Wirt and Greg complete their quest. She hates doing it, so most of the time she doesn't want to stick around.

Beneath her prickly façade, though, she actually has quite a kind heart. And perhaps someday Wirt and Gregory will find her to be a true-blue friend after all.

PM: I couldn't come up with another name for the frog, and then I thought, "Maybe Greg can't come up with another name, too."

Some of these frog sketches are directly inspired by an 1890s McLoughlin Bros. board game called Game of Frog Pond. Eventually I took that inspiration and morphed it, making the head bigger until landing on the final frog design.

PM: The shaded one on the right that's more rendered, I said, "That's good, that's Beatrice." That's her first design.

Art: Patrick McHale

Before Beatrice was embodied as an enchanted bluebird, she was imagined as a bee. But McHale concluded, "A bee wouldn't be that great for fall weather."

PM: These are sketches based on videos of bluebirds. I was trying to figure out how birds fly, trying to figure out how to draw Beatrice in different poses.

PM: It was tricky trying to find a character design style that I could draw comfortably, that looked appealing, and that also had enough realism that it captured the right tone for our story. The Woodsman sketches in the top left would have made a fun-looking show, and would have been easy and fun to draw, but it wouldn't have worked for the story we wanted to tell. I did the colored image on the opposite page, and it felt close . . . but it wasn't until Nick did a ton of sketches that he was able to find the right look for the Woodsman. The blue sketch on the right side of this page was the one where I thought, "That's him!"

Nick Cross: We looked at hairstyles from the 1700s. Pat wanted him to have his hair combed forward. You can see how his hair comes in toward his face from his sideburns.

Art: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale

"THE WOODSMAN"

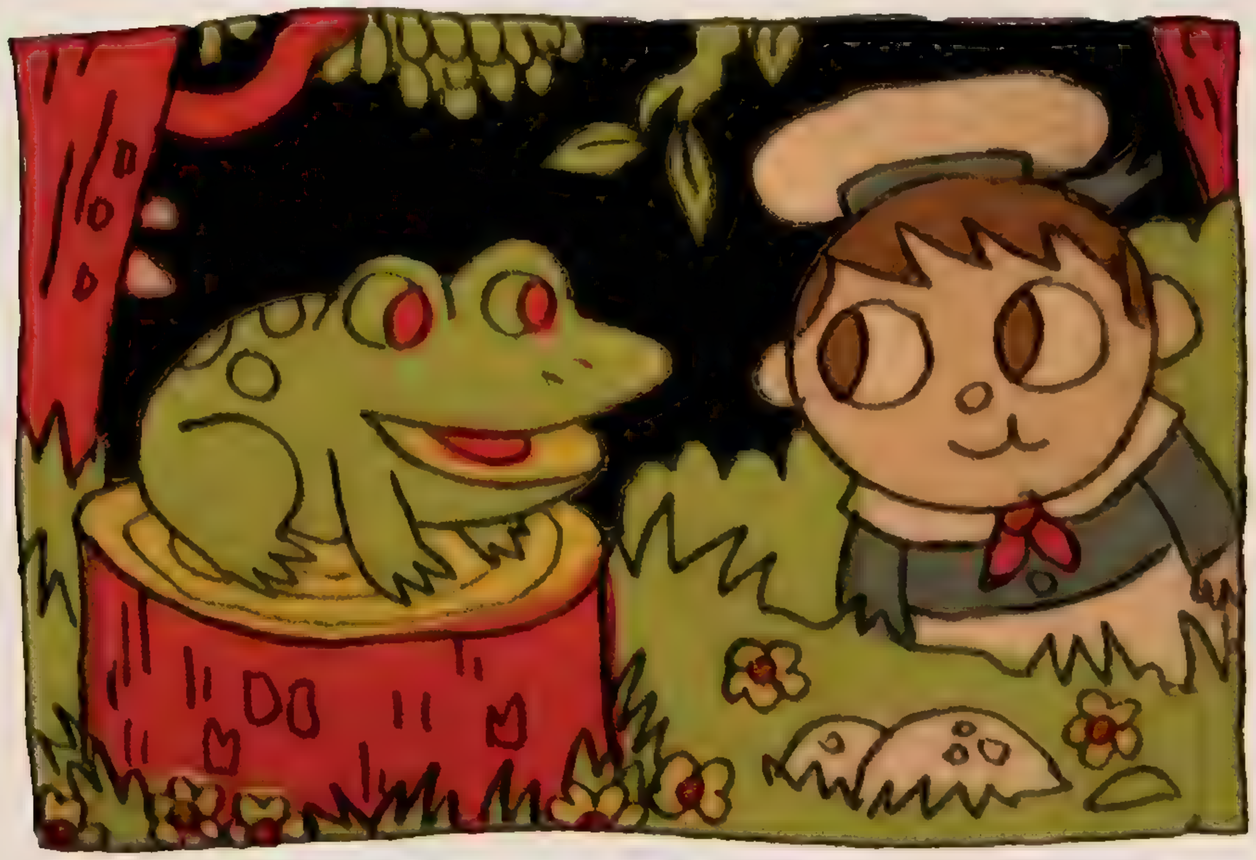
The Woodsman is a wise man who knows all the secrets of the forest. He knows why the leaves sway in the breeze, and why deer don't eat daffodils.

He acts as a spiritual guide for Wirt and Gregory as they travel through the land of the Unknown (like Obi-Wan Kenobi or Mr. Miyagi). He is the keeper of the Tome, which contains Wirt and Greg's story, and is the only one allowed to touch it. Although he cannot travel with the brothers (he has wood to chop), he is always watching . . . making sure Wirt and Gregory stay on their correct path.

He is the only person in the Unknown that Wirt and Greg feel they can completely trust.

But CAN they trust him? As the series progresses, Wirt and Greg begin to discover that the Woodsman may have much more sinister motives than they originally thought!

FRIGHTOWN FOLLIES



PM: This is a color test to see if I could make the style "animatable" for TV. I had already done the artwork that was in the bible--shaded pencil work, colored digitally--but I couldn't figure out a way to make that feasible for TV animation. In the end we just went with normal black lines, with some colored lines here and there.

Art: Patrick McHale

“The Unknown”

The Unknown is the place between life and death, between dreams and reality. American folklore, classic fairy tales, Victorian ghost stories, and dream logic all combine to create a never-ending and ever-changing landscape full of strange inhabitants (think Alice’s Wonderland or Dorothy’s Oz).

As the brothers strive to live out their story and find their way home, they interact with all the characters and stories included within the Woodsman’s Tome of the Unknown . . . From the skinless witch who kidnaps people while they sleep . . . to the citizens of Frogland, who work along the river and talk with spit bubbles . . . to the terrible Mr. Whittles, who uses children’s bones for his “ivory” carvings . . . etc., etc.

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(story ideas)

"LITTLE BLACK TRAIN" (PILOT)

On Halloween night Wirt and Greg accidentally get on a train headed for the afterlife, and jump off halfway. They end up in a place called the Unknown . . . a mysterious land that lies somewhere between life and death. As Wirt and Greg come to grips with the reality of this strange world, it becomes apparent that getting home is impossible. Until, that is, they befriend a wise old woodsman (and his friend Beatrice, the bluebird) who reveals the secret to returning home: they must live out all the chapters in his mysterious book, the Tome of the Unknown. When they reach the end of their story, they will find their way home.

"BLUEBIRD OF HAPPINESS"

The Woodsman gives Beatrice the responsibility of helping Wirt and Gregory carry out the next chapter of the Tome of the Unknown (which involves a lady in white who sings to lure travelers into the tall grass, where a beast devours them). But the more Beatrice tries to help them, the more Wirt has a tough time believing in all the superstitions and nonsense of the Unknown. And Gregory keeps goofing off with his pet frog. Eventually Beatrice gets so fed up with the two brothers that she leaves them to figure things out on their own . . . with dangerous repercussions. In the end the brothers realize they had better take their quest a little more seriously.

"LOVESICK MILLIONAIRE"

Wirt and Greg get involved with a lovesick millionaire who's having visions of a beautiful lady that he wishes to marry. If they don't find her soon, he'll die. And if he dies, then he will haunt them forever for not helping him. But when the brothers start trying to track her down, a silent, hairy man keeps showing up to stop them. Is he bad? Did he kidnap the lady? Is he her guardian? Is the millionaire a crazy, two-faced lunatic dressed in a hairy costume? In the end Wirt and Greg discover that the hairy man is the beautiful lady herself! Long ago she was engaged to another fellow, but his mother cursed her to be hairy, and she was then rejected by her fiancé. But she soon realizes that the millionaire is her old beau (who became rich during their separation) . . . and once the couple realize that all the misunderstandings were caused by the millionaire's mother (who's now long gone), everything turns out swimmingly.

"NIGHTMARE"

While Wirt and Gregory are sleeping one night, a horrible skinless witch comes and rides Greg

off into the darkness like a horse. Wirt eventually discovers that the witch is one of the people in a small Puritan-like town . . . but as soon as he does, she returns home and catches him! The only way he's able to defeat her is by putting salt and pepper on her discarded skin, so that when she tries to put it back on, she gets burned.

"GOOSE STEP"

Wirt, Greg, and Beatrice find a parade of musical animals who are being chased by hunters. While trying to stop the hunters and save the defenseless animals, they learn that the hunters are actually soldiers . . . and that the animals were once soldiers as well, but were cursed by the moon for being too loud at night. Wirt and Greg have to travel to the moon (using a reflection in a pond) to try to get him to undo the curse so that the animals can defend themselves. But in the end he just changes everybody into animals . . . including Wirt and Greg! (Greg becomes a duck, and Wirt looks like either a bear or a dog . . . Nobody can tell which.)

"FARMTOWN FOLLIES"

Wirt and Greg have been turned into animals (in the previous episode) and want to get back to their normal forms (although Greg is having a lot of fun now that he and R. Bliss can talk using "animal speak"). But Beatrice doesn't recognize them anymore, and abandons them. While trying to find her or the Woodsman, they get caught up in a game of cat-and-mouse with a farmer who thinks Wirt and Greg are after his crops (in truth, Greg and R. Bliss do keep eating his crops). After they all get captured and trapped like farm animals, they need to use their new animal prowess to escape . . . before they become dinner!

"FROGLAND"

Our heroes (still animals) find themselves in a place called Frogland, a riverside town of hard-working frogs. They plan on just passing through—until they meet a singing frog drifter named J. Bliss and realize . . . it's R. Bliss's dad! R. Bliss struggles with whether to stay in Frogland with his dad or continue on with Gregory and Wirt. In the end, R. Bliss's father makes the decision for them when he disappears in the middle of the night (hitching a ride downstream) because he is a fugitive from the law. R. Bliss is disappointed with how things turned out until he finds a note in the player piano which says his dad will come back someday to help them all get back to their home.

"THE TOAD AND THE WISHING WELL"

Wirt, Greg, and R. Bliss discover a fat, shivering Toad King who lives in a cold wishing well and has the power to grant them anything they desire. But the Toad King is a jerk and says he'll never give them anything because he already has everything

in the world that he'd ever want (he's sitting on a big pile of gold and stuff that people have thrown down in the past). Wirt overthinks the problem while Gregory and R. Bliss just keep throwing stuff into the well hoping they'll get lucky. In the end, they realize the Toad King is only mean because he's so cold and shivery. They get a spider to spin him a sweater to warm him up. It works! But just as Wirt is about to wish to return home, he realizes that if they return home now, they'll be stuck as animals forever. Instead he wishes to return to human form . . . much to the dismay of Gregory (who can no longer talk to R. Bliss).

"IVORY"

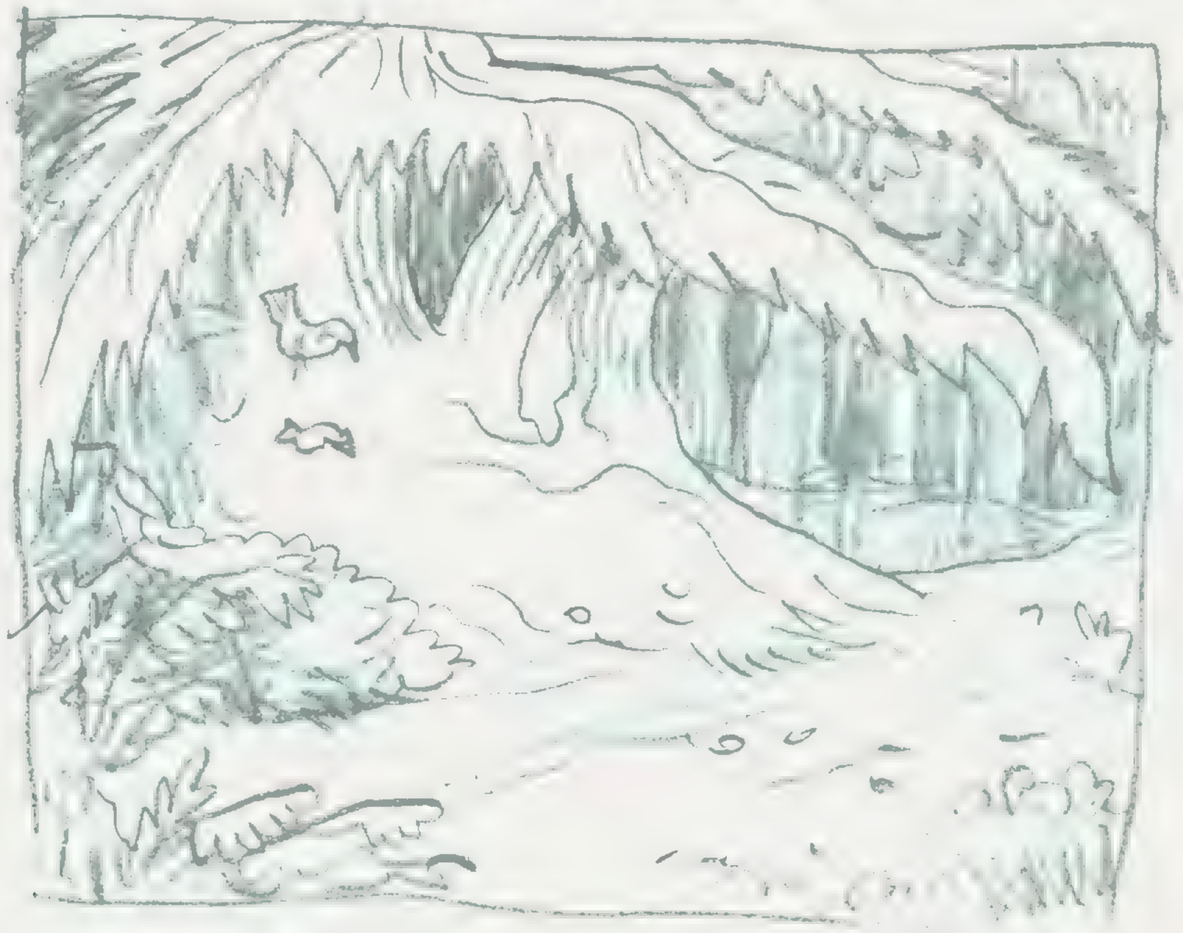
Beatrice finally finds Wirt and Greg, and is pretty pissed they made her fly around looking for them for, like, a week. She tells them how to get to the Woodsman's house and leaves. But Wirt overthinks her directions and ends up getting lost. They come to the house of a man named Mr. Whittles, a guy who carves ivory. He says he knows exactly where the Woodsman lives and promises to bring them there in the morning. But as the night passes, Mr. Whittles's dark secrets begin to unravel. They eventually learn that he gets all his "ivory" from the teeth and bones of children he kidnaps! Finally they discover all the boneless children living in the basement, and with their help they defeat Mr. Whittles and get the heck out of there.

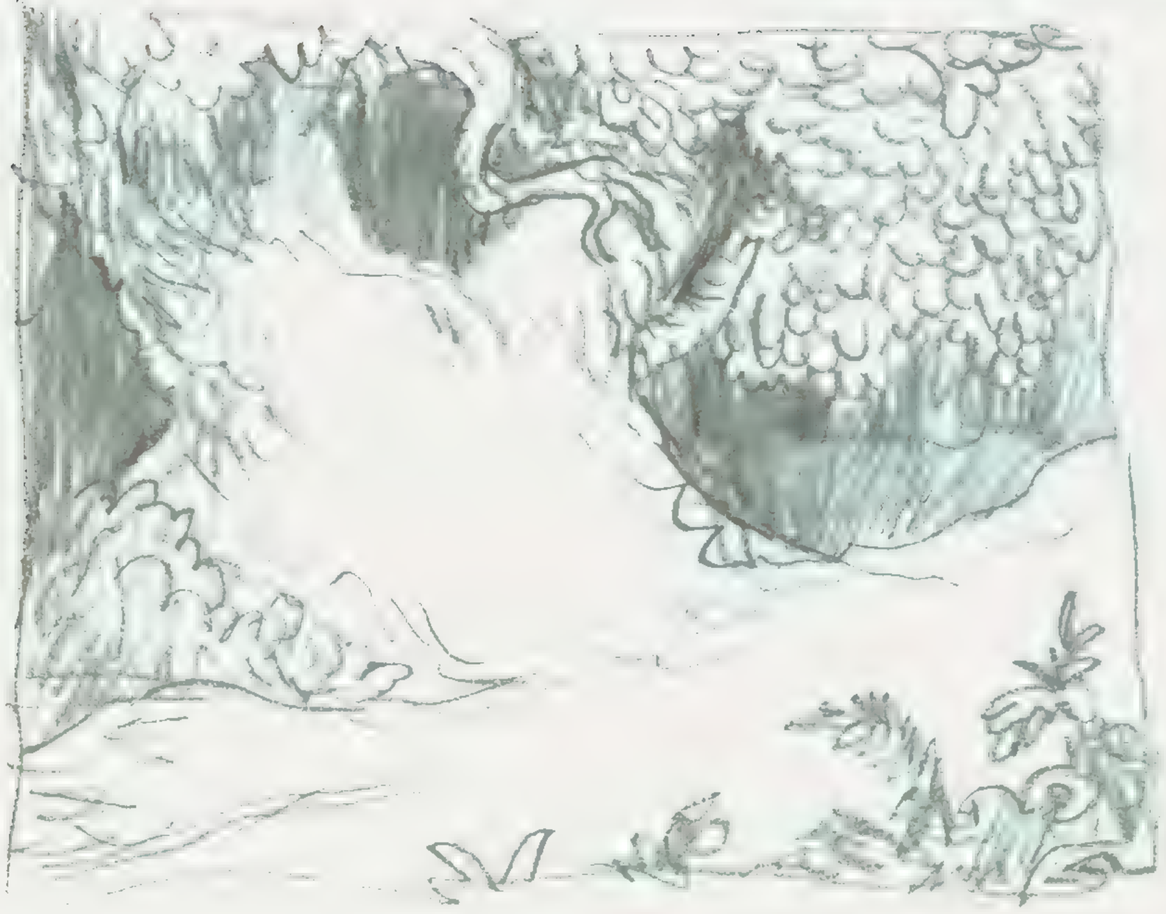
"HOME"

Wirt and Greg finally find the Woodsman, who tells them that they are doing very well. While at the Woodsman's house, Wirt and Greg discover a set of train tracks. Could it be that these train tracks lead back home? The Woodsman tells the boys they are not ready to return home . . . but Beatrice convinces them to go. They follow the tracks and, sure enough, end up back in their hometown! But as they return to their daily lives, they start noticing weird phenomena. Pieces of the town are missing, or warped . . . and on TV everything is reruns . . . They eventually realize that the town is just a projection of their memories, not actually their hometown at all. The Woodsman guides them back to the Unknown, explaining that they have a few more chapters to complete before their story is done.

"LAST FAIR DEAL GONE DOWN"

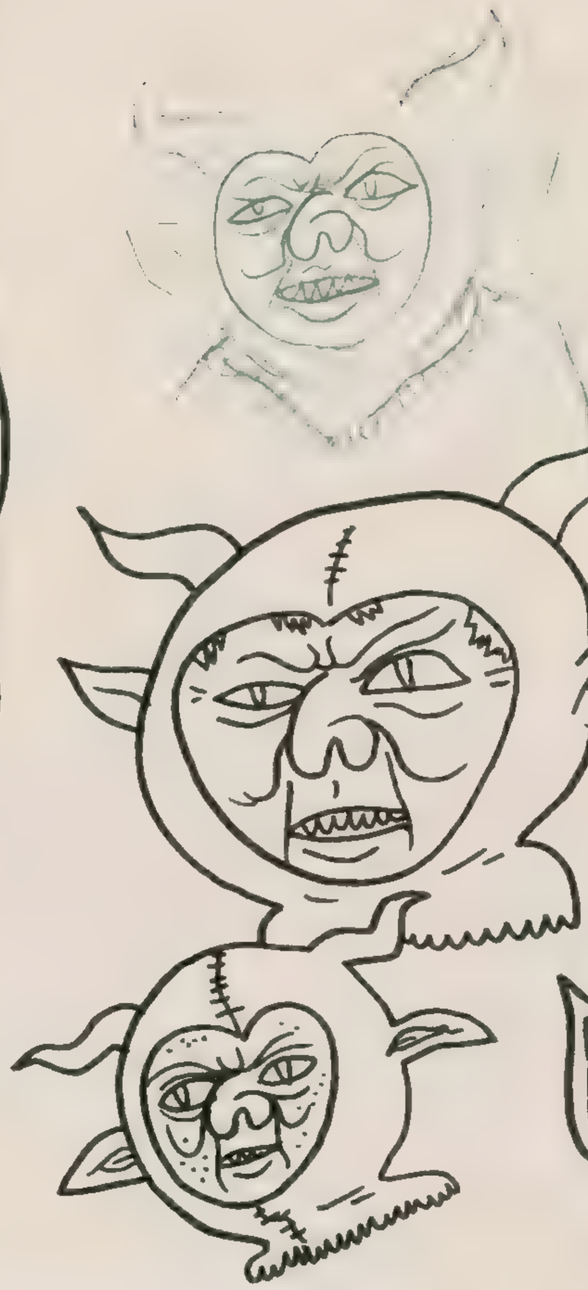
After a big argument between Beatrice and the Woodsman, Wirt and Gregory catch the Woodsman talking to an evil specter and writing new chapters into the Tome of the Unknown! It turns out he's the one who trapped them all along! It's hard to believe, but it's true. Wirt and Greg are determined to steal the Tome of the Unknown in order to rewrite their story and get home.

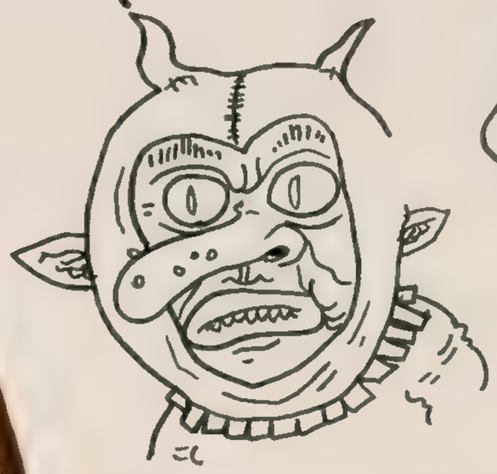


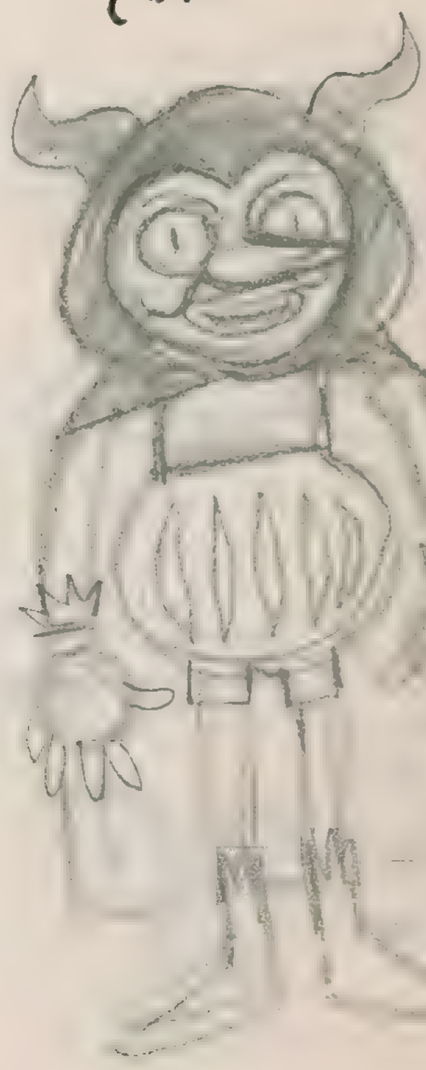


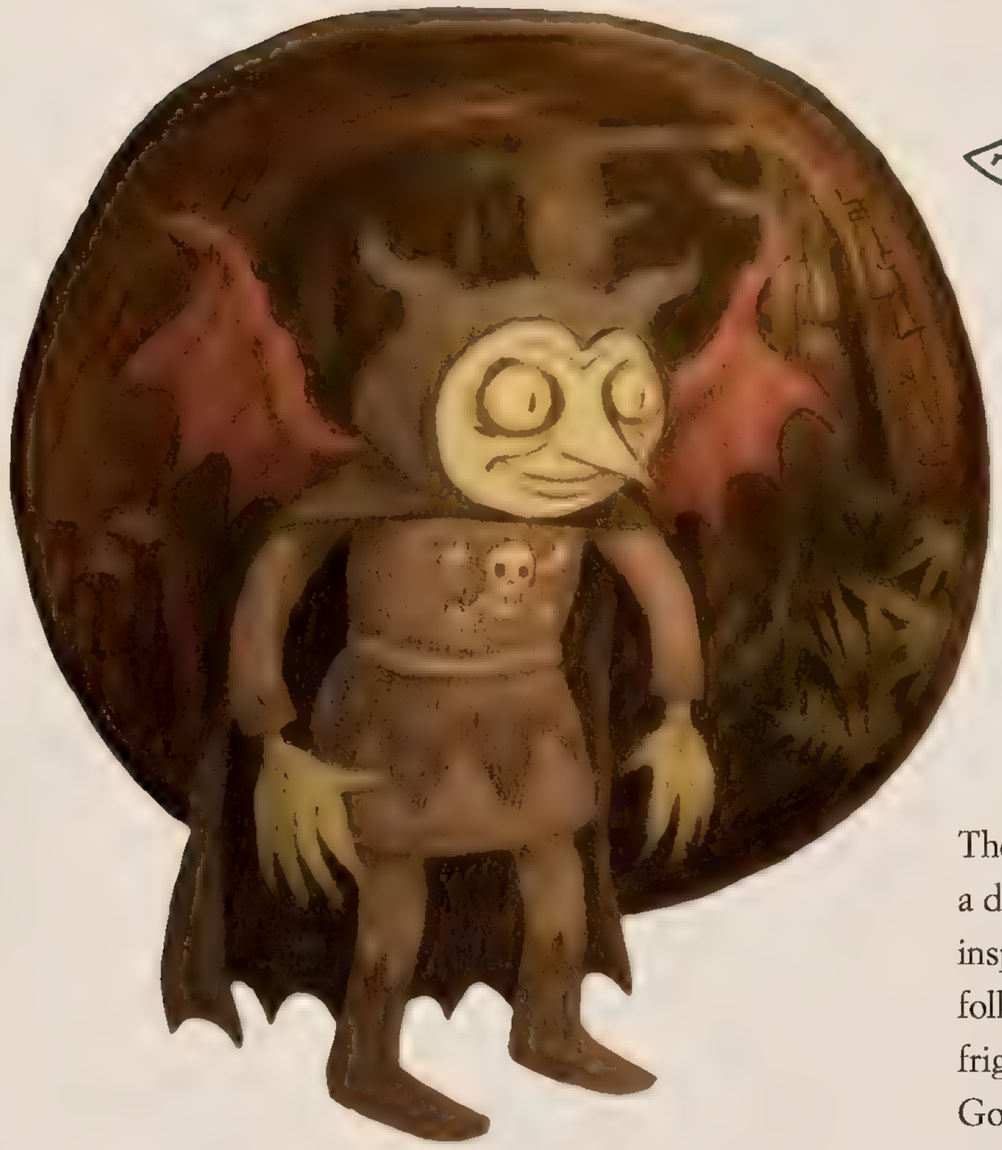
In developing *Tome of the Unknown* and researching ideas for backgrounds and layouts, the team reviewed various old fairy-tale collections. This page features sketches directly referencing some of the illustrations found in these books.

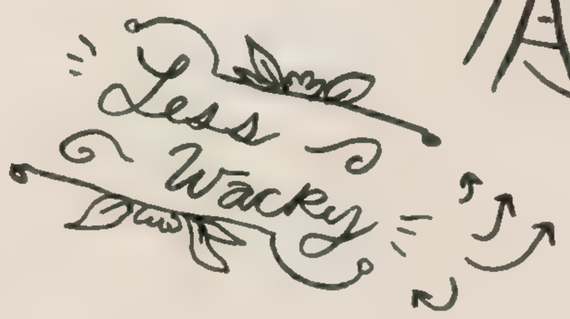
Art: Patrick McHale









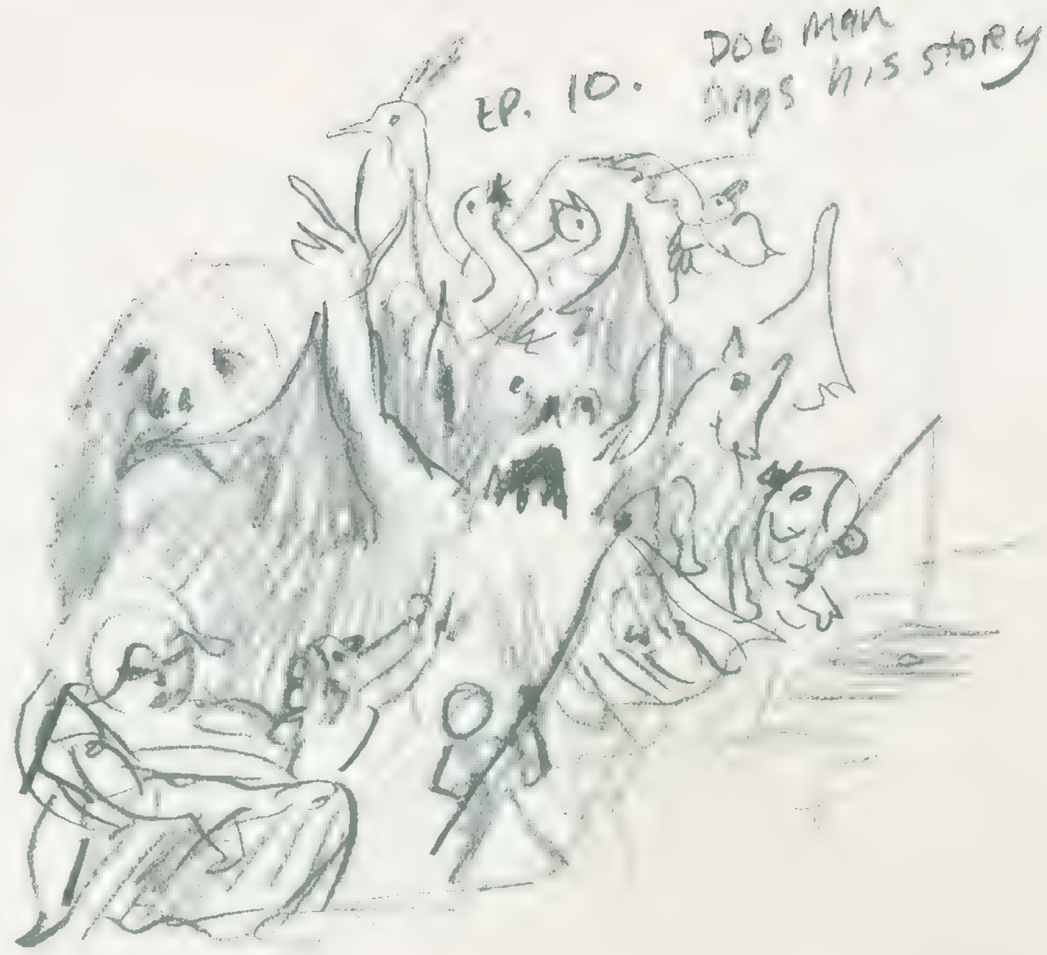


The first villain created for the *Tome of the Unknown* bible was a diabolical, but cartoony-looking, figure named Old Scratch, inspired by the devil-character motif often found in American folklore and literature. Sometimes this character was meant to be frightening, such as in Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story "Young Goodman Brown," while other times he was just a mean-spirited but hapless dope who was easily tricked by the hero of the story.

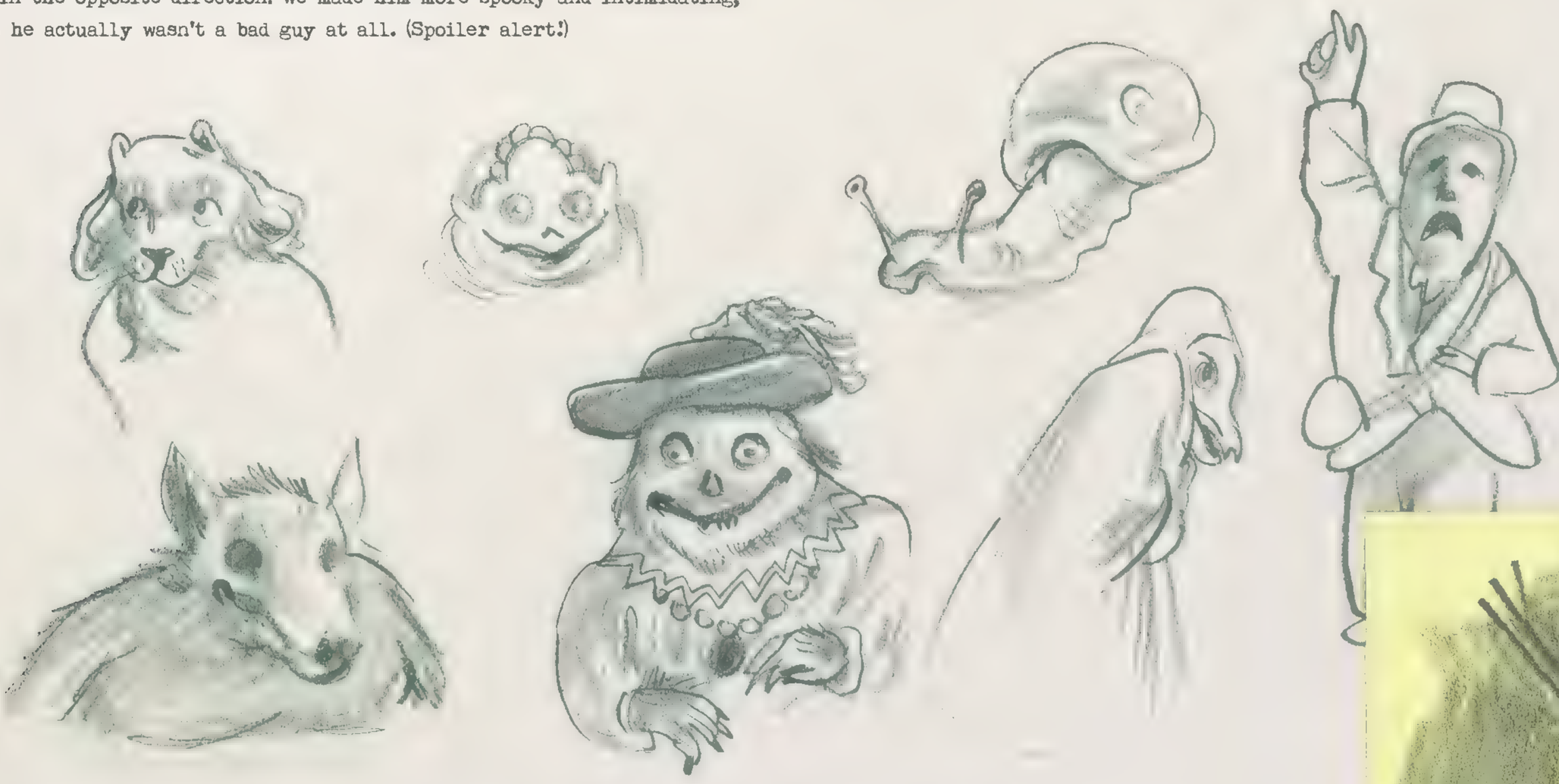
Art: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale

PM: This pencil sketch was the first incarnation of the Woodsman designed for Tome of the Unknown. The note "horns inside" refers to an early plan for the character to be the primary villain.

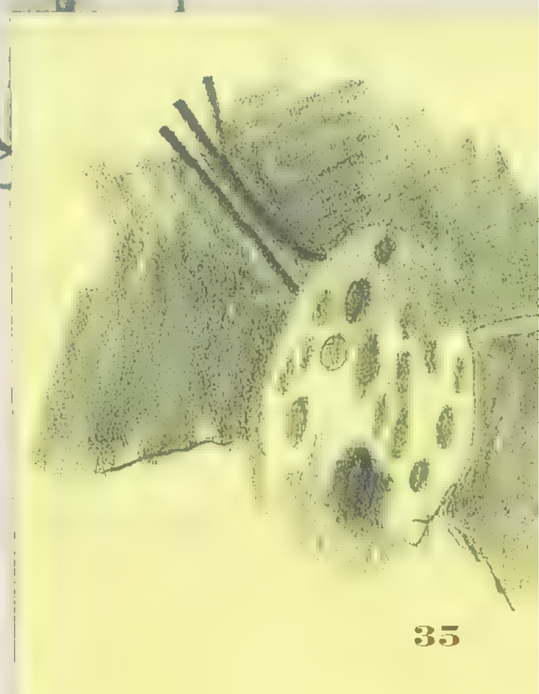
In this version, I wanted the Woodsman to seem nice, friendly, and helpful, but he was secretly bad. Later, for the actual series, we decided to go in the opposite direction: we made him more spooky and intimidating, but he actually wasn't a bad guy at all. (Spoiler alert!)



PM: "The Dogman" was the name of the Beast for a short time. I was thinking that the first act of the last episode could just be a full-blown opera piece, with the Beast singing his backstory. He'd essentially try to win you over by telling you his story, but when you see what he's done to Greg, you go, "No, even if your story is tragic, you don't have any excuse for doing that."



PM: I kind of like the guy with the hat. That was another early idea for the Beast. It fit the tone of the series a lot more than those original goofy devil-like sketches on the opposite page, but we wanted the Beast to embody the Unknown, and this guy felt too specific.



PM: These are a bunch of concept sketches for the Beast that Nick Cross and I drew during production. We kept going back and forth with all these different designs. Nick did a million beautiful drawings and pretty much all of them would have made incredible-looking villains, but we felt like they were too specific. They felt too "villainy" and not mysterious enough.

NC: We never had to check anything with Cartoon Network, especially with the Beast. I'm sure they would have had some issues with a few of these. But this is where we went at first.

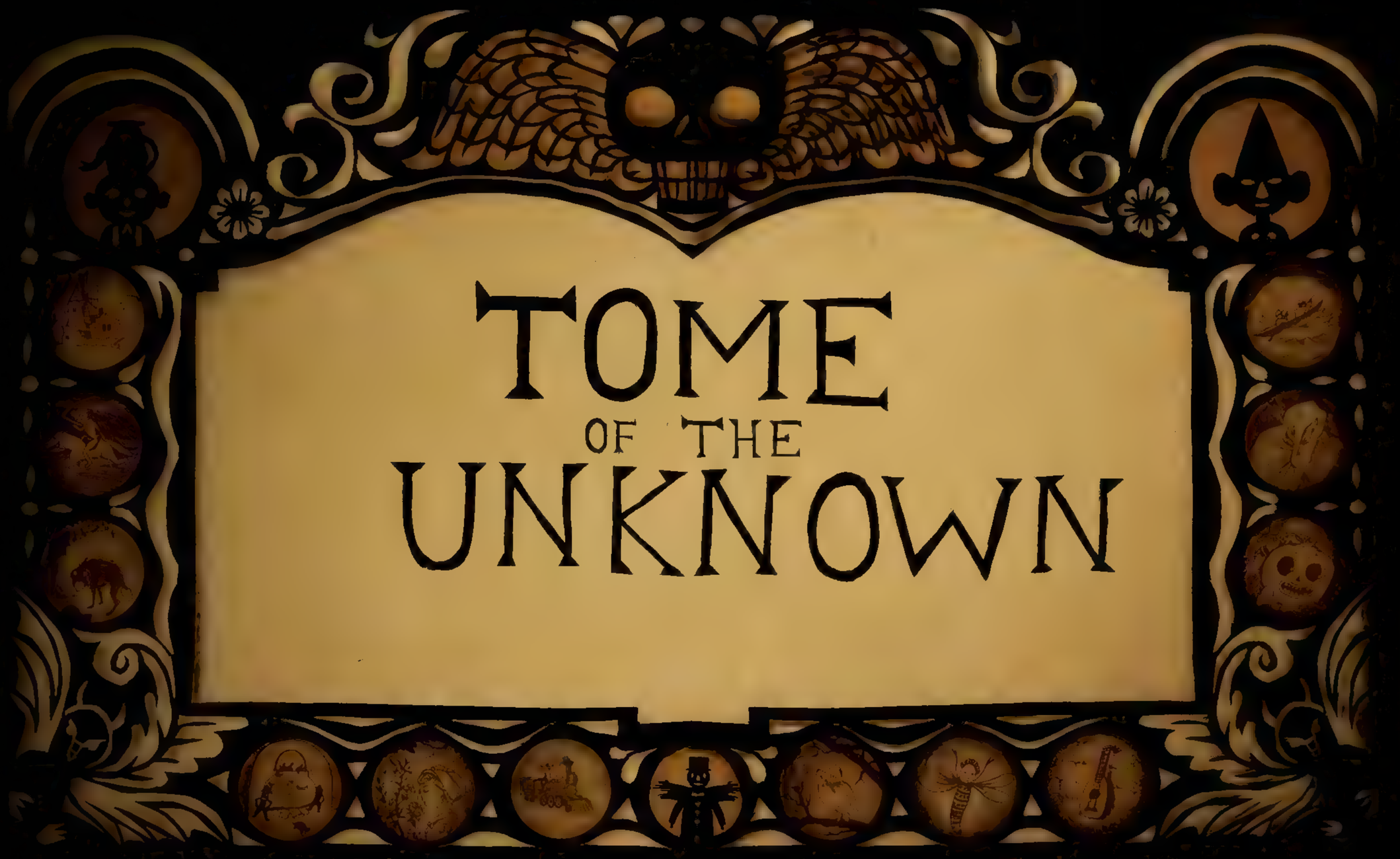
Amalia Levari: I think the Beast made sense to me after I saw the way Pat and Nick were designing him. The degree to which he was really sinister didn't gel with me until I saw what he looked like and how much a part of the forest he was. He had evolved into an actual, perfect reflection of unknown danger. The thing you're most scared to see in the dark.

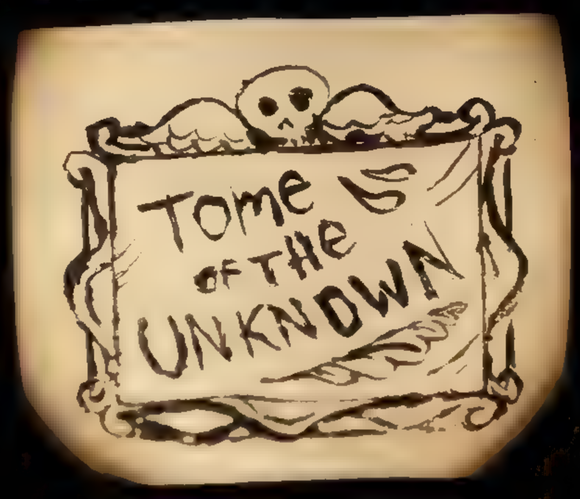
Character Design: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale

PM: This is the Beast's final color model. You can finally see his little spindly legs! Those aren't necessarily his actual legs, but we just needed to draw something for his model. We didn't actually want the audience to ever see his legs; we wanted them to always be hidden by fog and darkness so he would feel like part of the forest itself, as if he was almost physically connected to it. He looks pretty silly as a model sheet, but once he's on a dark forest background, he starts looking spooky.

PM: At one point during production, we decided that this sketch was going to be the Beast's model. The storyboard artists boarded the show with that design. Even the final episode was storyboarded using that model . . . until we changed it again at the last minute. Then we had to go back and redo all of the Beast's scenes throughout the entire series.

Background Layout: Chris Tsirgotis
Background Painting: Nick Gross





PM: These images at the bottom were attempts at coming up with title cards for the pilot. I tried to make little handmade magic lantern slides by painting small pieces of cellophane. I liked how they looked, but they felt a bit too crude. The final title card was a combination of cut paper and pencil sketches.

Art: Patrick McHale

"I HAD NO CLUE WHAT THE STORY WAS ABOUT."

—Chris Tsirgiotis, Background Designer

Cartoon Network released *Tome of the Unknown: Harvest Melody* through its website on September 9, 2013—just in time for festival season. That same night it screened at the LA Shorts Fest, before making the rounds at stops including the Ottawa International Animation Festival and Austin Film Festival. The eleven-minute short served as the pilot for *Over the Garden Wall*.

Patrick McHale: People's taste in entertainment changes as they get older, just as people's taste in food changes. It's a physical change. Kids can't taste sweetness as strongly as adults, but they taste bitterness more strongly. That's why kids can enjoy super-sweet candy, while adults are like, "Yuck, it's too sweet!" And adults can enjoy bitter coffee, while kids are like, "Yuck, it's too bitter!" Nobody is right or wrong; people are just physically different. The same applies to entertainment. Kids feel emotion and conflict more strongly, so they don't need as much of it as adults do. A little goes a long way. Kids need new things to discover: new characters, new color palettes, new songs, new enemies, new funny voices, etc. The more new and exciting stuff, the better. To adults, kids' shows sometimes look like crazy nonsense. So when you're making something for an all-ages audience, you have to find a good balance. *Over the Garden Wall* was an attempt to trick kids into liking stuff that they'd normally think was boring and old, and to show adults that kids' entertainment is more sophisticated than they think.

Susan Mondt: Pat was saddled with Phil Rynda and me because we were the creative side of development. I was the art director and Phil was the character designer. All of the pilots at Cartoon Network for two years went through us. I thought *Tome of the Unknown* was amazing. I thought it was beautiful and the idea was charming. It was a little bit dark, and to say that Cartoon Network was completely hands off would not be true. I would credit Cartoon Network with being open minded to a show like Pat's. It was a very unique idea for any network or big animation studio.

Phil Rynda: I wasn't there, but after Pat pitched one of the stories to the network, I saw Rob Sorcher and asked how the pitch went. He said, "It was five minutes of a kid staring at his own hand. I don't really know what the hell that thing was, or if kids are going to like it, but I think Pat might be a genius." I felt really excited, because I agree. I think Pat is an incredible storyteller and human. The company was going to take a pretty bold risk on what it could be. The way the story plays out and the tone of that show is not your standard cartoon fare. When you think about Cartoon Network at the time, *Teen Titans* was a big hit, *Gumball* was a big hit,

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN: HARVEST MELODY

Creator, Director, Writer, Designer, and Storyboard Artist: Patrick McHale

Creative Director and Character Designer: Phil Rynda

Character Designer: Mikkel Sommer

Background Designer: Chris Tsirgiotis

Background Painter: Nick Cross

Design Clean Up: Erik Elizarrez

Color Key: Ron Russell

Art Director: Susan Mondt

~~one~~ a Soldier needed help to sail his ship they help until they realize he's headed for a battle to kill people.

Witch is overly large

PM: The first storyboard I did ended up as episode 7 of the series, "The Ringing of the Bell." That was intended to be the pilot. When I pitched it to Cartoon Network, the pitch went well, but there was also a lot of concern that it was too scary and hopeless. The more we discussed it, the more worry I felt from the network. I tried to explain that this scary episode was just one aspect of the show, and that each episode would feel different, so they suggested I do another storyboard to show them another side of the show. That's why I storyboarded "Harvest Melody," which became the pilot.

Art: Patrick McHale

Adventure Time and *Regular Show* had a solid audience. Disney was still coming off the high of *Phineas and Ferb*. Nickelodeon was riding on *SpongeBob*. For Pat to come in and make this very, very unique type of a story, it really came out of left field.

Patrick McHale: As I was making the pilot, I was thinking of it as my last chance to make a proper film. I started getting bummed out because I'd wanted to make something scary, but the pilot storyboard ended up being about a vegetable guy who drives a vegetable car. I tried to make the intro a little bit spooky, and we had all the animals attacking at the end, but I was still kind of disappointed. Then we started doing the art, and Chris Tsirgiotis did some backgrounds, and we started seeing things come to life . . . so I started getting really excited again.

Chris Tsirgiotis: Susan Mondt, the art director for the pilot, brought me in to work with Pat because she thought my style would work with what he was doing. Nick Cross started as one of the painters, and when the miniseries was greenlit, they brought Nick in as the art director.

After the first meeting or two, we'd just watched an animatic, and Pat said to me, "Do you know what's going on in this story?" I had to be honest: I had no clue what the story was about. I said to Pat, "I like the characters and I like the situation they're in. I'm sort of along for the ride with this show. It's an interesting bunch of vignettes—I'm not really sure what it means yet." And I didn't, actually, until the eighth episode.

Patrick McHale: Chris is a chameleon, stylistically. He can exactly emulate just about anyone's style. It's rather uncanny. It can make you second-guess: "Did I draw that?" On *Adventure Time*, I recall background artist Ghostshrimp being really impressed, and almost upset, that Chris could so accurately emulate his style. So with my own show it was thrilling to give Chris reference and just see what he'd do.

Chris Tsirgiotis: Every show I work on is a recipe. It's a little different each time. I'll look at the show and see the shape language and the line quality.

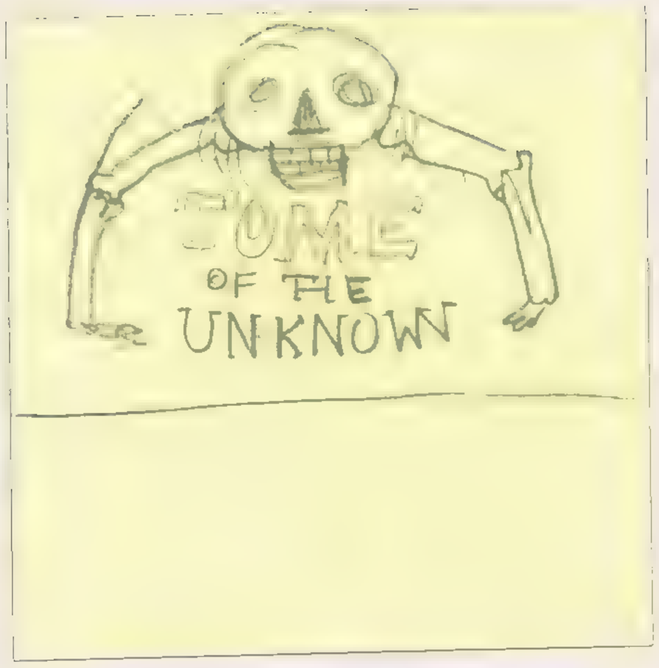
Patrick McHale: At one point, Chris copied the way that I was shading in pencil, thinking it was the style I wanted, but really it was just my mistakes. It was embarrassing to see my limitations reinterpreted visually as an intentional style! I said, "No, no! Don't do it how I did it! Do it how you'd do it!" So he came back with this gorgeous drawing of a really thick tree and I was so blown away. I thought, "This can look like a feature film!"

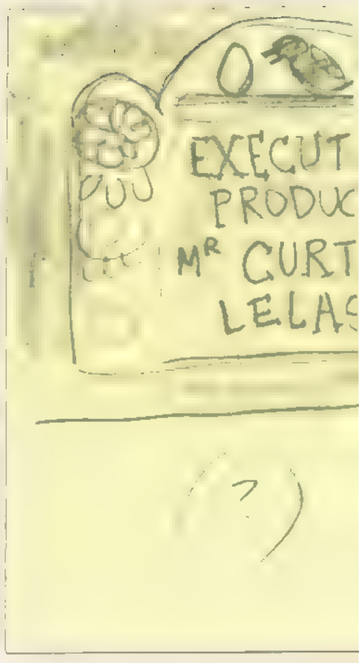
Nick Cross: Susan Mondt contacted me out of the blue and asked if I was interested in doing some background paint on a pilot. Cartoon Network was just beginning its new batch of shows, like *Adventure Time* and *Regular Show*, so I thought Cartoon Network shows looked kind of simple. I was doing storyboards at the time, and it sounded like a good freelance side project. I thought it would be relatively easy. Then they sent me Chris Tsirgiotis's background that he had done, and it was beautifully rendered pencil. It looked like an old Disney layout from the forties. I definitely wanted to be involved. In the end, I painted all of the backgrounds for the short.

Susan Mondt: We did completely rendered pencil drawings, and then we scanned them in through the computer and painted on top. So you could still see the pencil images—all of the shading and texture and nuance of that pencil drawing come through the colors and make the painting that much richer.

Nick Cross: A lot of TV is done simply and cheaply. And Cartoon Network said to do whatever we want. So I just went crazy. It was time consuming, which is why most shows don't look like *Over the Garden Wall*. For TV, it doesn't work—you have to keep on moving and moving. Because I was working on the pilot, we had a finite number of backgrounds. And I was working freelance from Canada, so I didn't hear any pushback from anybody. But I was working really hard. And then when we went to series, it became a bit of a problem. Because we only did ten episodes, it was fine. I don't think we could have done a full series. It would have been too much. We knew we were only going to do a one-hundred-meter dash, so we could run as fast as possible.

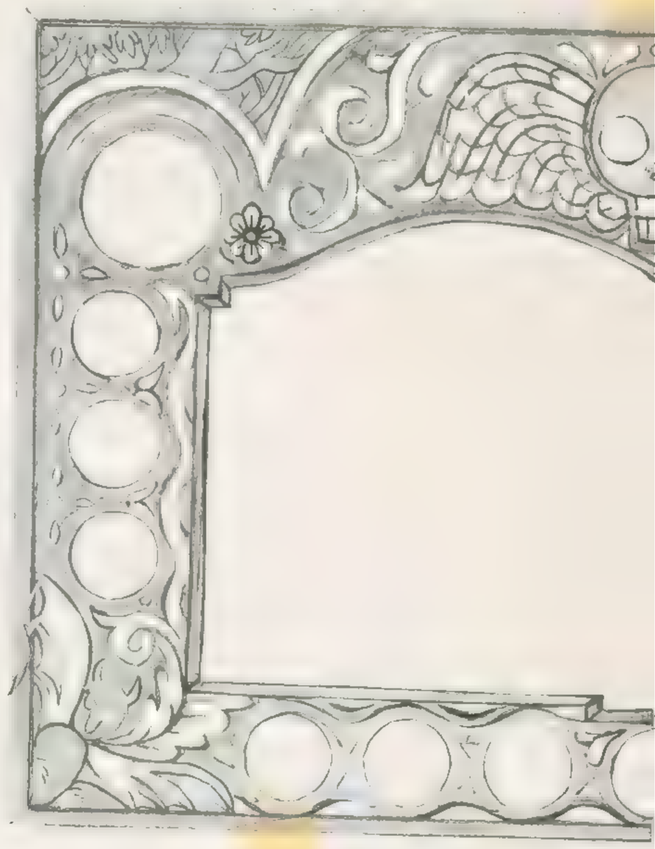
Tome of the Unknown
background art by
Chris Tsirgiotis



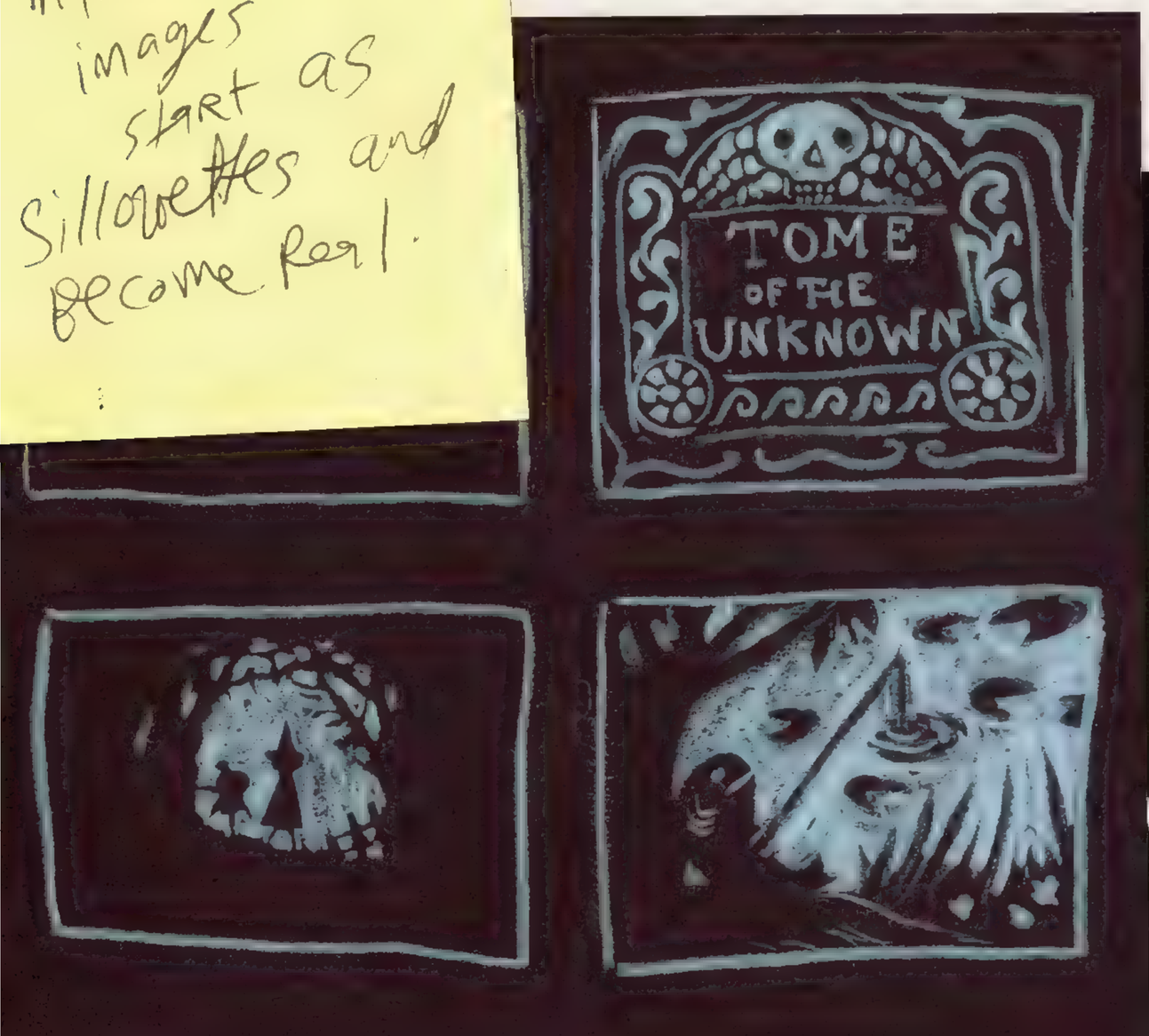


TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

PM: This was an early idea for the logo, which I thought looked pretty good. But I decided that I wanted it to look less Victorian and more naive, colonial, and primitive. Especially because the show had nothing to do with old books anymore. But by the time we were doing the mini-series, the Victorian influence had somehow crept back in, and the final Over the Garden Wall logo was full-on Victorian style again.



intro - Folktale images start as Silhouettes and become Real.



Art: Patrick McHale, Chris Tsirgiotis

Phil Rynda: We hired an amazing designer, Mikkel Sommer. Pat wanted to put together a team, and he wanted to chase after certain feelings. I knew Mikkel from his comics; he's not an animation guy. He brought a certain tone to the table with the vegetable people and the animals. We just had to make it work for animation. My job was to help Pat pull together all of these pieces to start making this project uniquely its own, without it feeling too nostalgic to the cartoons we were referencing. So we built a vocabulary that's unique to this show—a combination of all of this stuff that Pat was inspired by, but it wasn't just nostalgia. It was really fun and challenging.

Mikkel Sommer: I hadn't done a lot of character design previously. I do comics and kids' books. Pat sent me references of old illustrations and textbooks and said, "That's the vibe I want." He had the main characters sketched out. I needed to start somewhere, so the first thing I drew was a little sketch of the two brothers, and then a rough sketch of the vegetable guy. He was fully made of vegetables. He didn't wear any clothes. And I tried to put some colors into them. I made the little brother too colorful. Pat told me to play around with it.

Chris Tsirgiotis: I share Pat's love for old things. Maybe that's one of the reasons I got into background design and character design, to play with the architecture and design of different eras. So when Pat showed me that source material and all of those old weird postcards, it was really appealing to me. I like seeing things that I haven't thought that much about. For some reason, I always gravitate toward projects that have more of an older, darker kind of feel, with traditional villains. I played *Dungeons & Dragons* a lot as a kid.

Nick Cross: Before I got started, Pat had made this huge reference folder of old vintage postcards, and illustrations, and paintings that he liked, so that got me into a mindset of what he wanted. I tried to make it look like something from the past. That was the overall goal for the entire series. We wanted to make it so no one can place when it was actually made. It could have been made in the forties, then gotten lost and found again.

We found a lot of landscape paintings that were done in the 1800s, when people used to hike out to the mountains to paint. I was looking at those, and concentrating on how the light in a forest pierces through in little spots. There are little pools of light everywhere, and it plays off the trees. I knew that he also wanted it to be set in the fall, which naturally gives you a lot of nice warm colors, and a lot of atmospherics from fog.

Mikkel Sommer: It felt old. It had the spirit of classic cartoons. I love *Silly Symphonies*, and *Pinocchio*, and some of the weirder old Disney stuff. When Pat told me that the pilot was about vegetable people, I thought it sounded cool. I've done some comics and kids' books that take place in everyday life, with modern buildings and clothes. For some reason, that bores me a lot. This is a bit darker. It wasn't the typical Cartoon Network, like *Dexter's Laboratory*, *Johnny Bravo*. This felt, in some ways, warmer, and closer to kids' books.

Phil Rynda: Our preproduction team here sets the style and the bar, and the animation team in Korea has to produce every shot and background. They use the stuff we produce, but that's not enough to finish the show. For the pilot, the director of the animation studio actually drew most of the layouts himself for the backgrounds. The way the studio system in South Korea works is that there's a flat rate for background design. The amount of work that went into those backgrounds—no one was willing to do it for the price that they were willing to pay. So the director who was overseeing the project in Korea actually did the layouts himself.

Susan Mondt: There was a lot of pushback from the overseas studio. They said, "We can't do that." And we were like, "Yes, you can. We'll show you how to do it." And we did have to make an extra effort to say that it's not that difficult. We broke it down into steps and it looks incredibly complicated in the final, but it's not that hard. And they did a beautiful job.

Title card sketches by Nick Cross

~~Wirt greg~~

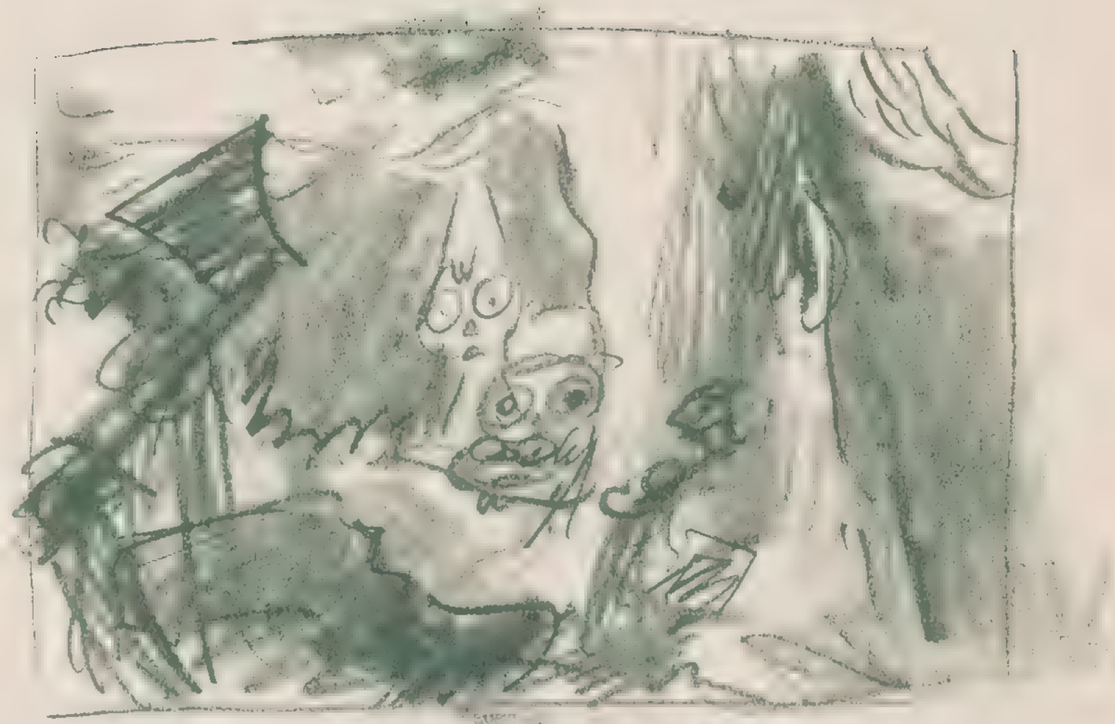
Wake up. Wirt staring up at the tree Branches. hears ~~greg~~ sound, turns to see greg eating grass & Bark with R. Bliss. Wirt says he'll look for some Real food for them. ~~they~~ thinks about it.

woodsman appears? ~~they~~ ~~greg~~

~~Wirt~~ hears wood chopping

woodsman ~~leads heroes to~~ plans on Bringing them someplace, But since they're hurry he shows them to a path that leads to a garden. woodsman is gone. collect food

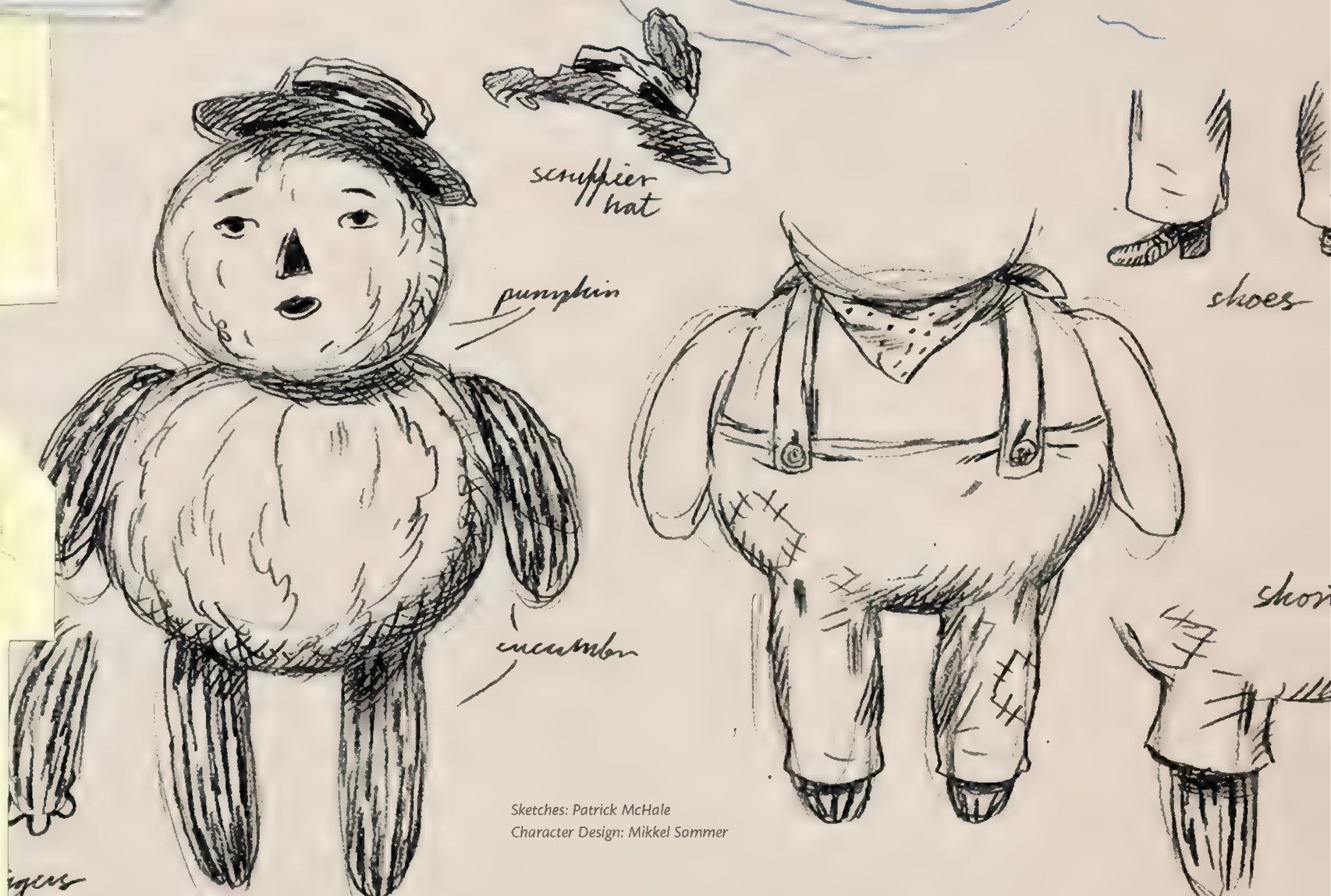
~~Wirt~~ Wirt & Greg ~~stop~~ in the garden (greg first) until →



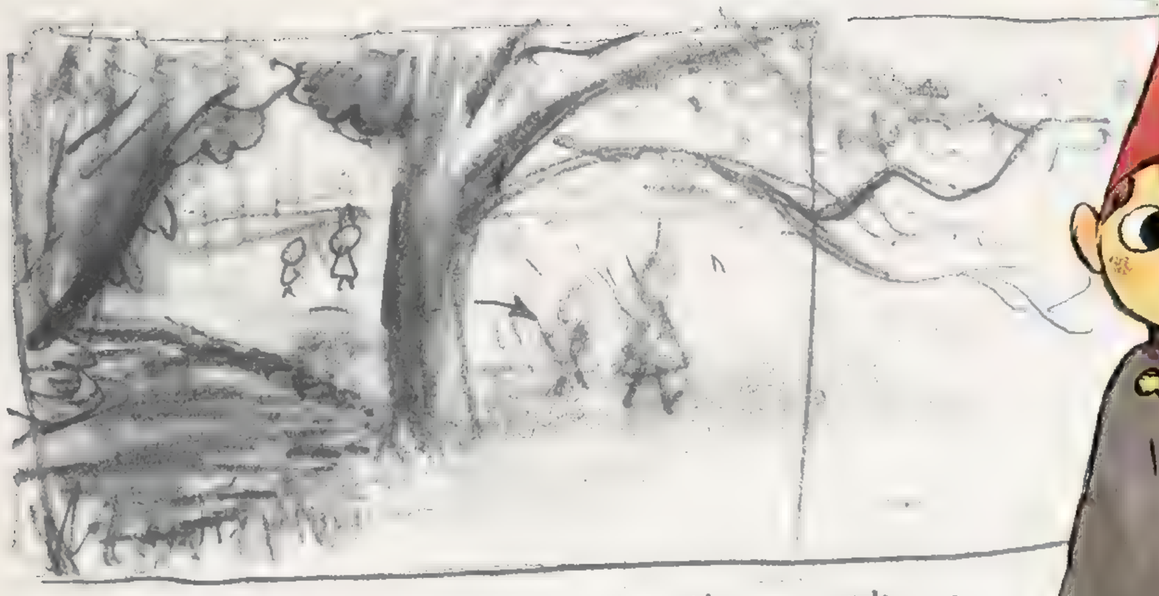
Don Quixote p.14

PM: This sketch above was inspired by a Gustave Doré illustration in Don Quixote. It probably doesn't actually resemble the original illustration very much; I was just trying to find some ideas for layouts.

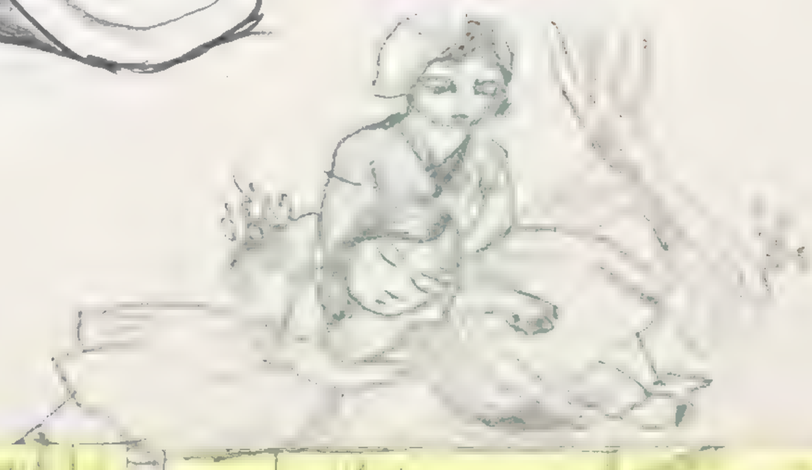
PM: The sketch to the right was probably inspired by that part of Hansel and Gretel where they ride a swan. I jotted down a lot of these kinds of notes and sketches and then I forgot why I'd drawn or written them, so eventually they evolved into something else. Maybe this evolved into Wirt and Greg riding a goose in the pilot. I don't know. Nobody knows the truth, and nobody ever will.

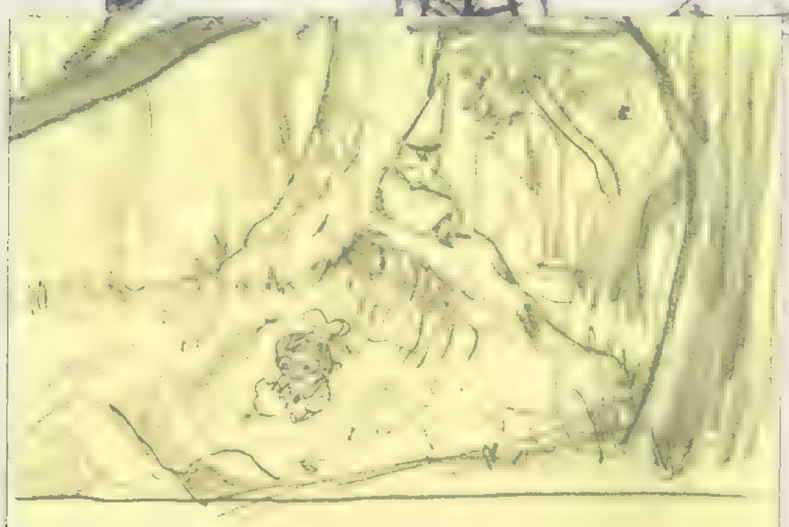


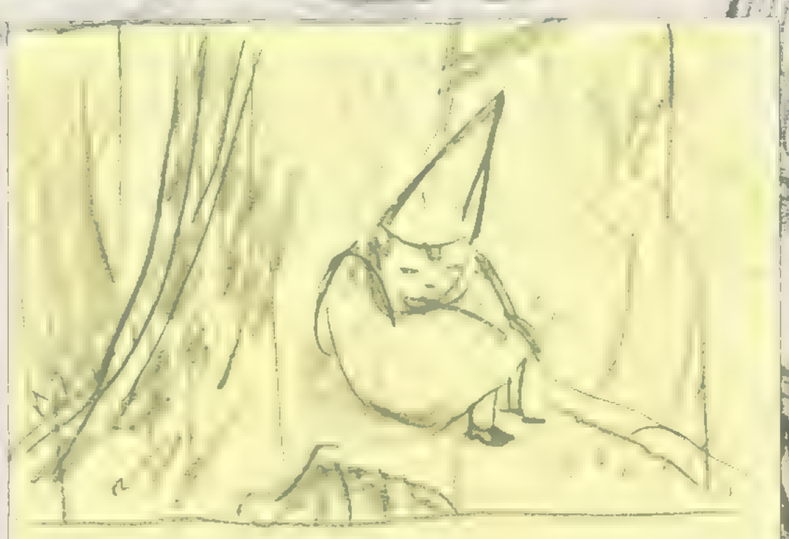
Sketches: Patrick McHale
Character Design: Mikkel Sommer



(W) It's just a little further.







(RAIN)

(Greg taunting old Grouch)

PM: This was one of my first attempts at starting to storyboard the pilot. Greg is still wearing a sailor outfit, so this was before I went through that design process. Greg is playing with mud while Wirt is cold and miserable, showing how they would react differently to rain. But eventually I realized that my first storyboard on Flapjack ("Cammie Island") contained a scene with Flapjack playing in the mud, so to avoid similarities I scrapped these boards and changed Greg's outfit.

Mikkel Sommer: This turkey is disgusting. Pat wanted a scary turkey. And I think it looks so disgusting. I gave it a black eye. Sometimes it looks like it's melting and has mutations on the neck. There's just layers of feathers. I haven't seen a turkey in Europe. It's a weird animal to me. It looks like a mix of birds.

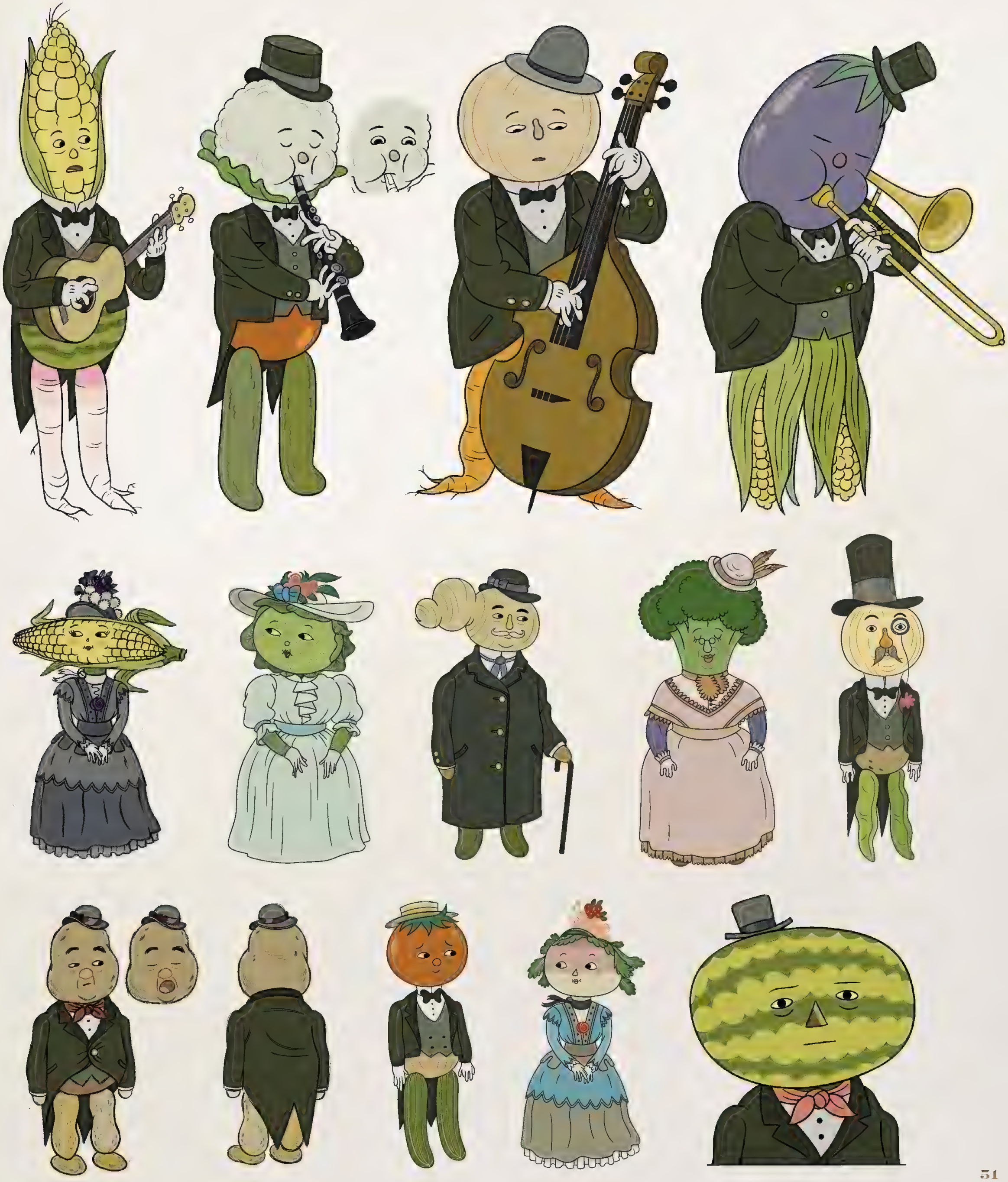
Character Design: Mikkel Sommer
Design Clean Up and Color Styling: Patrick McHale, Phil Rynda

PM: Mikkel did those great alligator sketches on the left, but I wanted the alligator to look less like a real alligator. I wanted it to look more naive, like a memory of an alligator rather than an actual animal. The final version that I designed was inspired by a Posada illustration.

Mikkel Sommer: It's funny he has a bow because he's a wild goose, but I thought it was a good look and Christmassy. The goose also has a realistic feel, with the proportions of the head.

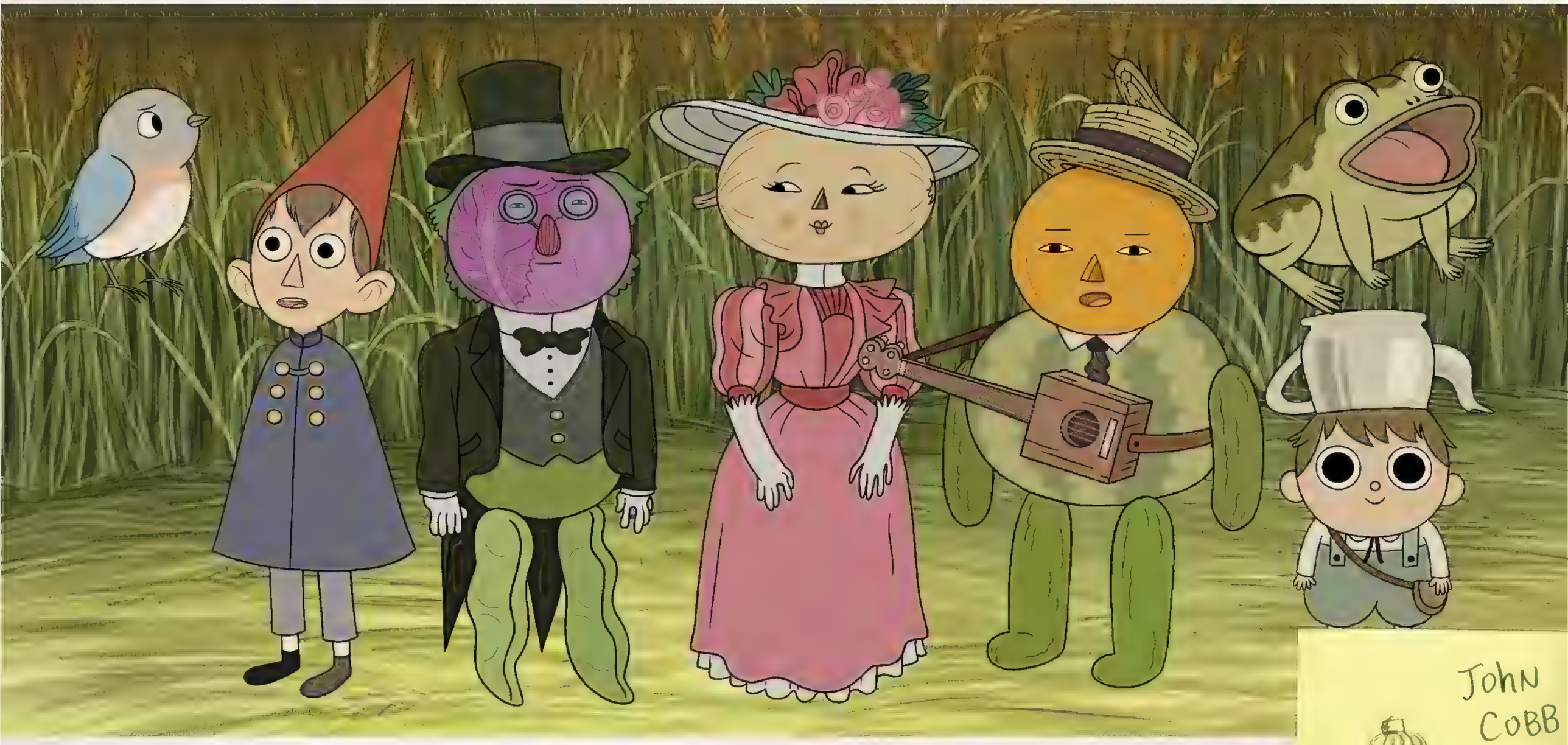
PM: Mikkel's crows were so awesome that we wanted to just use them as detailed as they were. But we figured out we could make them easier to animate by coloring them pure black and adding blocks of color to capture the highlights, which removed a lot of line work. In the end they stayed pretty true to Mikkel's original sketches.

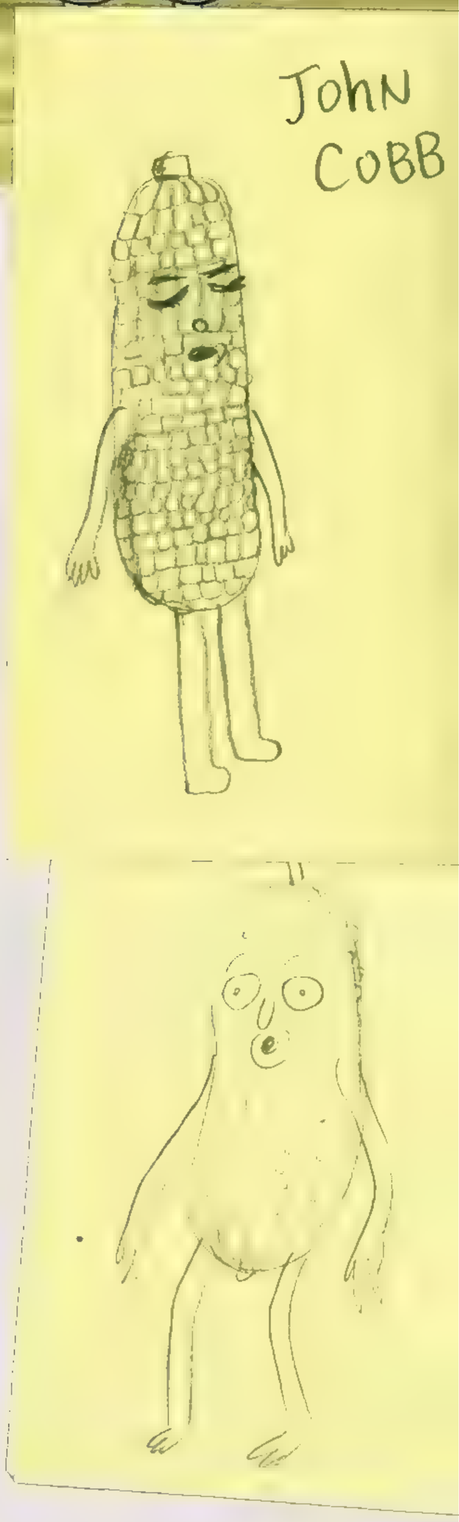
PM: The first character designs that Mikkel Sommer sent us were these beautiful pen-and-ink drawings. We'd discussed certain colonial and Victorian influences, and he really went for it. I would have loved to make a cartoon that looked like these sketches (that corn lady is amazing), but these weren't very animation friendly and didn't match the designs of the main characters. So we asked him to simplify. His second pass was adorable . . . but a little too simple for our show. On the third pass, he found the perfect balance, like the drawings above. They would not be too hard to animate, but still felt sophisticated and classy . . . and then Phil and I ruined that by removing everyone's pants in the final designs!

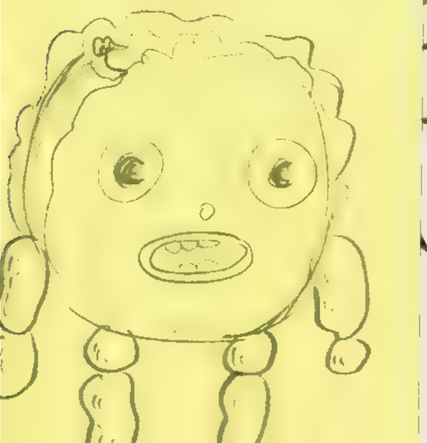
Character Design:
Mikkel Sommer
Design Clean Up and Color Styling: Patrick McHale, Phil Rynda

PM: Wirt's model sheets had to include him both with and without a cape. Usually his cape magically stays closed while he's walking around, but when he talks or runs, his arms and torso will sh w.

Sketches: Patrick McHale
Character Design: Phil Rynda, Mikkel Sommer
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Nick Cross
Color Styling: Susan Monat, Ron Russe

PM: Each time characters move to a new location, you have to make sure their stock colors look correct on the background. Sometimes you adjust the background, and other times you adjust the characters to match the lighting and mood of a new scene. We did a lot of special character-color models in the pilot because there were a lot of lighting changes. For this scene in the wheat field, Sue threw all of these characters onto the background and then adjusted them until they felt right. The hope is that viewers don't even notice the subtle color changes; they just feel the mood shifting.

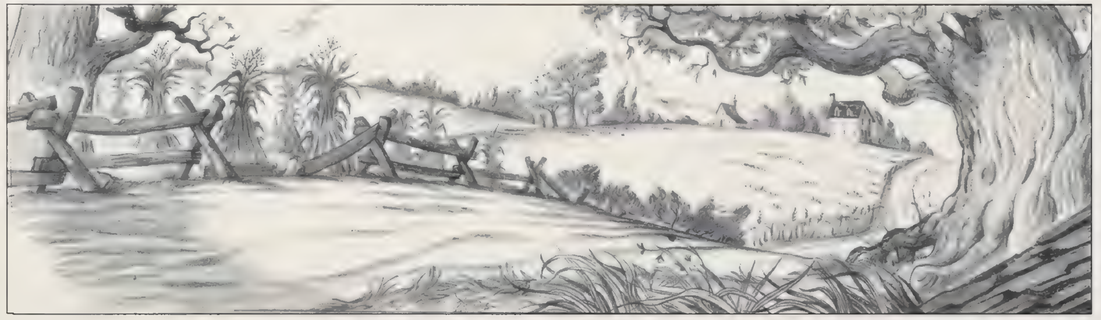






PM: The pencil drawings above are the cute vegetable folks that Mikkel sent us after we asked him to simplify his first designs. I love these cuties, but they didn't quite work for what we wanted. The sticky notes to the left and right are very early sketches I did before I came up with John Crops. At one point I was planning for the story to revolve around Wirt and Greg helping a lady rid her home of three very troublesome vegetable people who were causing mischief in her garden.

Susan Mondt: For an eleven-minute pilot, there was a lot of work to do. There were a lot of characters, there were a lot of times of day. There were a lot of mood changes. There was a lot to consider and be artistic about, to find a way to tell that story through color and find those moods. To make the daytime feel a bit frightening, because they were in the forest, and to make the nighttime at the party feel fun and lively, and then that night at the same time has to turn a little bit scary. So there was quite a lot of color story to tell. But it was super fun; for an art director, that's the most fun.



PM: This was the first full-color painted background we finished. Chris Tsirgiotis had done a few layouts of trees before this, but when he did this layout it seemed like a perfect scene to get us started in color. It contained trees, fields, fences, a road, houses, sky, grass . . . almost everything we'd be dealing with in the pilot. We sent the layout to Nick Cross to paint, and when he sent it back I remember Sue and I were just so excited. I hadn't expected it to look so lush and painterly. Sue did a pass on it to tie everything together and make it perfect, but we didn't actually have to give Nick any notes! Remarkable for a first pass of the very first painting. My parents actually have a little poster of this image hanging over the doorway in their house.

Character and Prop Design: Patrick McHale, Phil Rynda
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis. Background Painting: Nick Cross
Art Direction: Susan Mondt

PM: This was the first background Chris did in the style of the show. That was the YEAH YOU GOT IT moment, and that was what the show was based around. The look of it, the backgrounds, were based around this image. When he brought this in, I couldn't believe it. I said . . . we're making animation art.

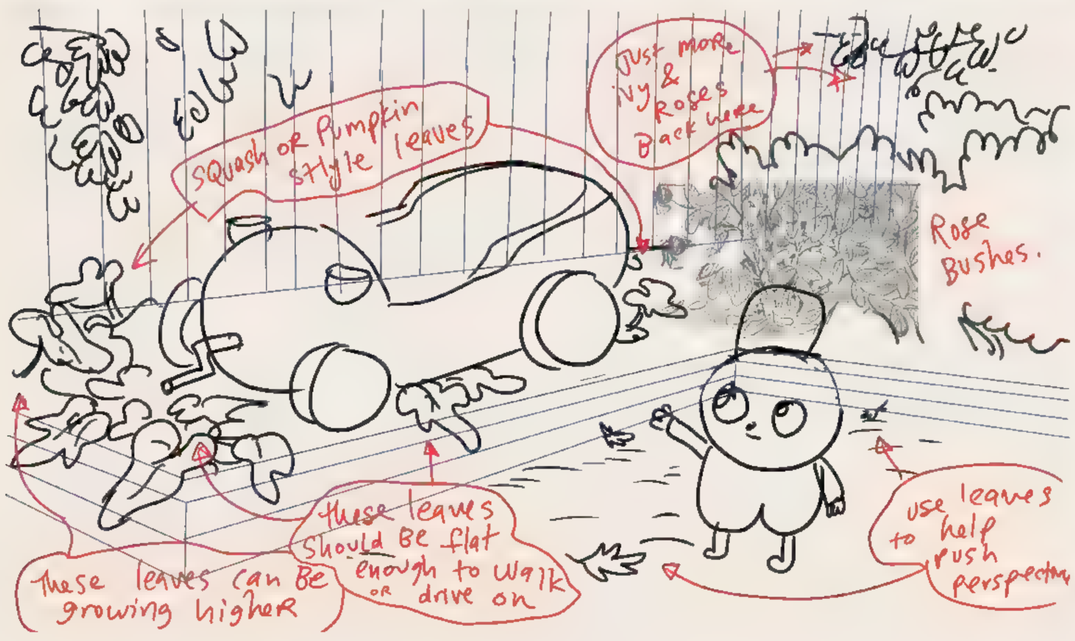
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis

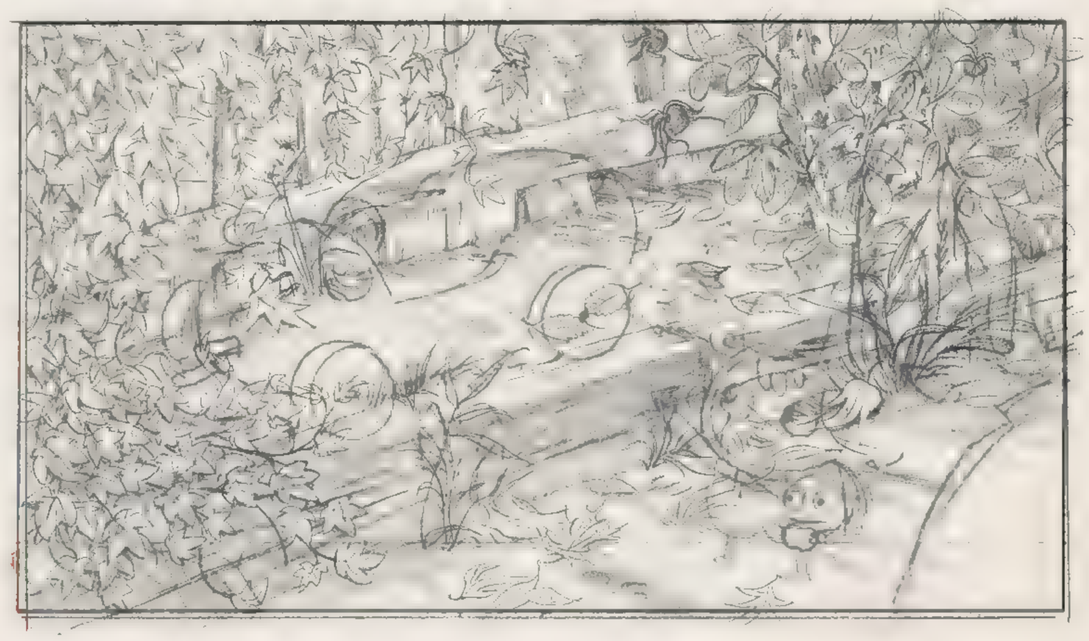
PM: For this project I wanted the world to feel as real as possible, so I asked Chris to be mindful of drawing specific leaves rather than random appealing leaf shapes. He drew ivy leaves for the ivy, rose leaves for the roses, and specific deciduous tree leaves for the trees. It was probably too much work, but it really did look great, and it helped make the world feel like a real place.

Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis. Background Painting: Nick Cross

This fg bush is pulled from
Bg 39. Scaled 95% and flopped.
the top rose bud is also tilted

Push the Perspective
a bit more so
cat feels small
in proportion
to car.

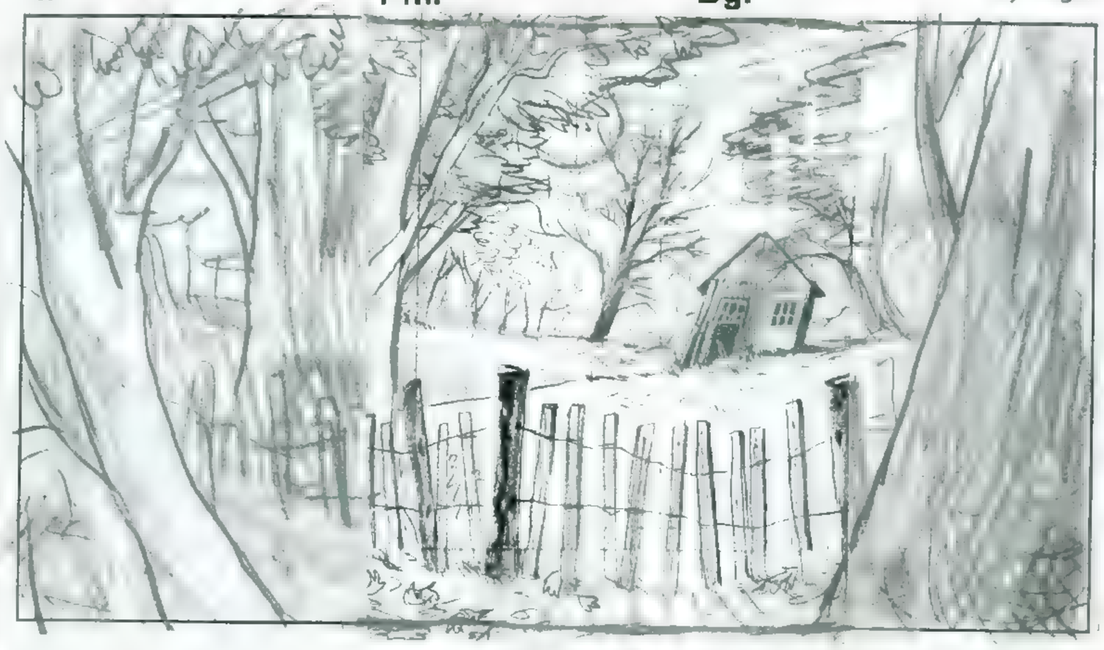

Squash or Pumpkin
style leaves
Just more
ivy &
roses
back here
Rose
Bushes.
These leaves can be
growing higher
these leaves
should be flat
enough to walk
or drive on
use leaves
to help
push
perspectiv



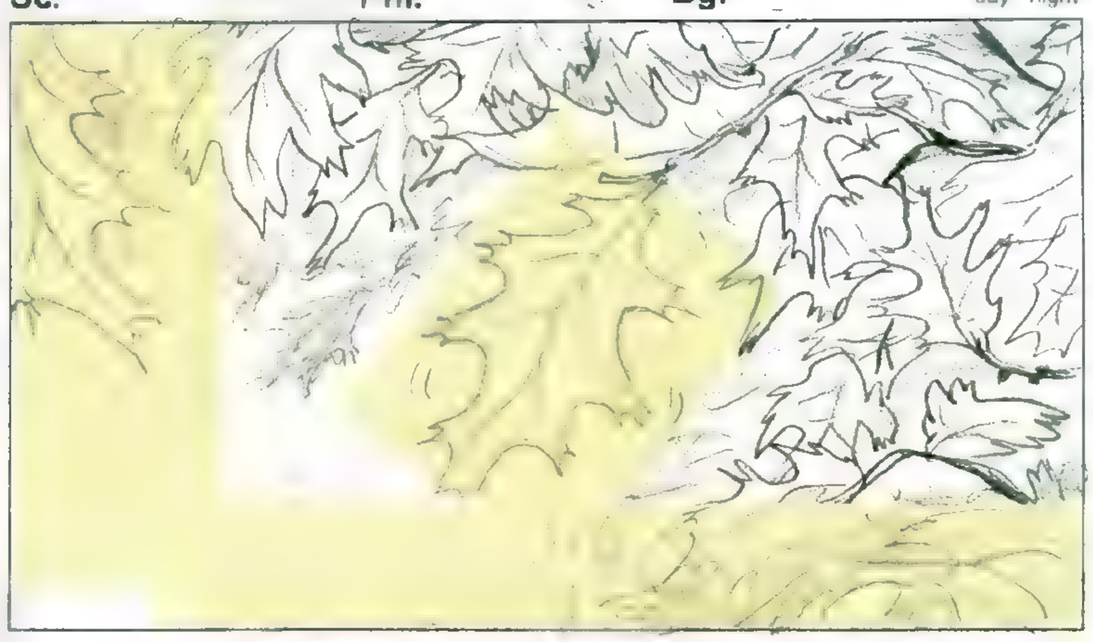
TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 1

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



Dialog: Music (swells up) - (song similar to intro of Radio show "Moon River")

Action: (Fade in)

Timing:

(All Leaves blow in the breeze.) (Man walks a bit more than mid-ROST)

EPISODE #

Production :

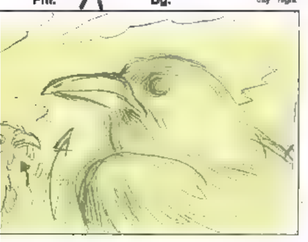
PM: I storyboarded a bunch of stuff that was just imagery to make the opening of the pilot feel fancy and classy. Most of those scenes weren't used in the pilot, but some of them were reused in the series itself.

Storyboards: Patrick McHale. Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis. Background Painting: Nick Cross

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 180

Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



): (scream continues)

s surprised by sound)

AUG 15 2012

1 12

Production :

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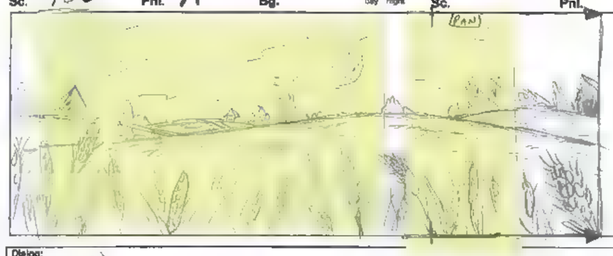
TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 181

Sc. 138 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



Dialog: (O.S.) (G) (scream continues)

Action: (slow pan)

AUG 15 2012

Timing: ADJ 2 12

Production :

501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Sc. 139 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. Pnl. Bg.

Dialog: (W) Greg!

Action:

AUG 15 20

Timing: 1 02

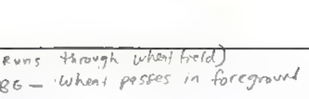
501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 183

Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 140 cont Pnl. B Bg. day night



(W) ..Huh..

runs through wheat field)

BG — wheat passes in foreground through scene)

AUG 15 2012

oon Rims)

sc 140 pnl A-D

2 12

Production :

501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Sc. 140 cont Pnl. C Bg. day night | Sc. 140 cont Pnl. D Bg. day night

Dialog: (W) Greg!

Action:

AUG 15 2012

Timing:

Production :

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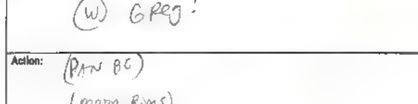
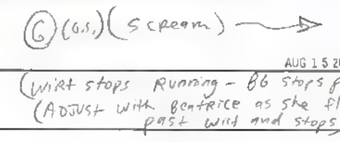
TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 184

Sc. 141 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 141 cont Pnl. B Bg.





Dialog: (W) Greg! (G) (O.S.) (scream)

AUG 15 2

Action: (PAN BG) (Wirt stops Running - BG stops p

(moon Rims) (ADJUST with Beatrice as she p

past Wirt and stops

Timing: 1 10 1 06

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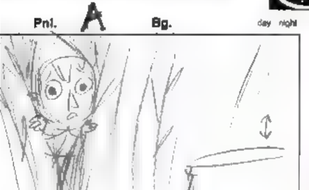
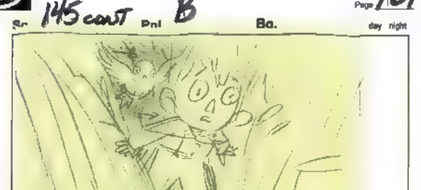
TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 186

Pnl. Bg. day night | Sc. 142 Pnl. A Bg. day night





(G) (O.S.) (scream)

(Veggie folks look up in Reaction to scream)

AUG 15 2012

1 05

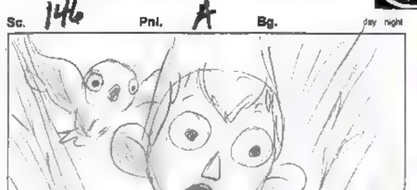
Production :

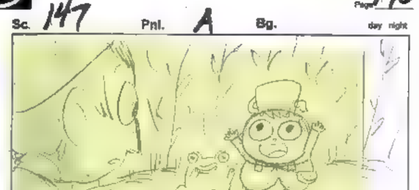
501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Sc. 143 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 143 cont Pnl. B Bg. day night





Dialog: (G) (O.S.) (scream)

Action: (crows are frightened of sound)

AUG 15 2012

Timing: sc 143 pnl A-B 1 06

Production :

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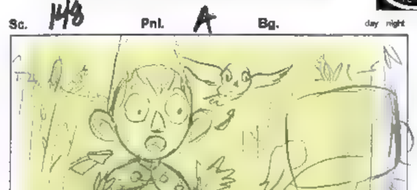
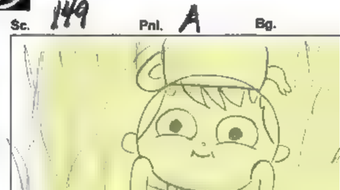
501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Sc. 144 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 144 cont Pnl. B Bg.





Dialog: (G) (O.S.) (scream)

Action: (Turkey Raises head and shakes nervously)

AUG 15

Timing: sc 144 pnl A-B 2 02

501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 145 cont Pnl. B Bg. day night

Reg in FOReground Bobbing up and down) (Wirt emerges from wheat and sees Greg)

(Wirt parts wheat)

AUG 15 2012

0 12 0 10

Production :

501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 190

Sc. 146 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 147 Pnl. A Bg. day night

Dialog: (W) Greg! Greg: AHHHHHHHH!

Action: (Greg and Frog dancing)

AUG 15 2012

Timing: 1 05 3 02

Production :

501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Sc. 148 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 149 Pnl. A Bg.

Dialog: (W) what? what?

Action: (Wirt walks to pose)

AUG 15 2

Timing: 1 07 1 08

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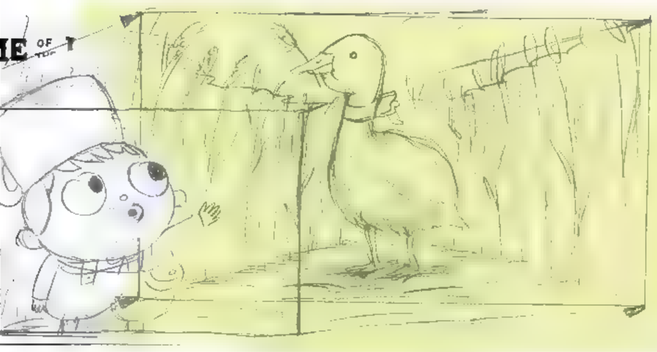
501/258

PAGE 192



Goose!!

K out to Reveal Goose)

AUG 15 2012

2 10

Production :

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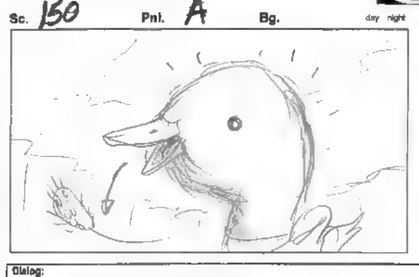
TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Page 193

Sc. 150 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 151 Pnl. A Bg. day night



Dialog: Goose: HONK!

Action: (Goose drops wheat)

AUG 15 2012

Timing: 1 02 1 15

Production :

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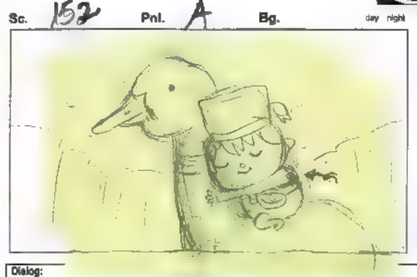
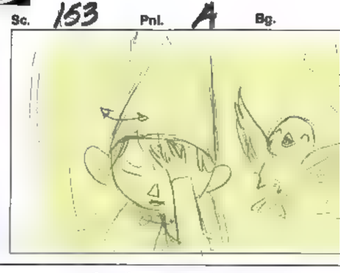
501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Sc. 152 Pnl. A Bg. day night | Sc. 153 Pnl. A Bg.





Dialog: (C) mmm... (B) (Laughing) (W) (sigh)

Action: (Greg hugs goose) (Wirt rests his head on his hand then shakes his hea

AUG 15

Timing: 1 14 2 10

501/258

501/258

TOME OF THE UNKNOWN

Sc. 154 Pnl. A Bg. day night

Sc.

Dialog:

(N) And that's JUST about where our story ends.

Action: (Goose cuddles with Greg)

Timing:

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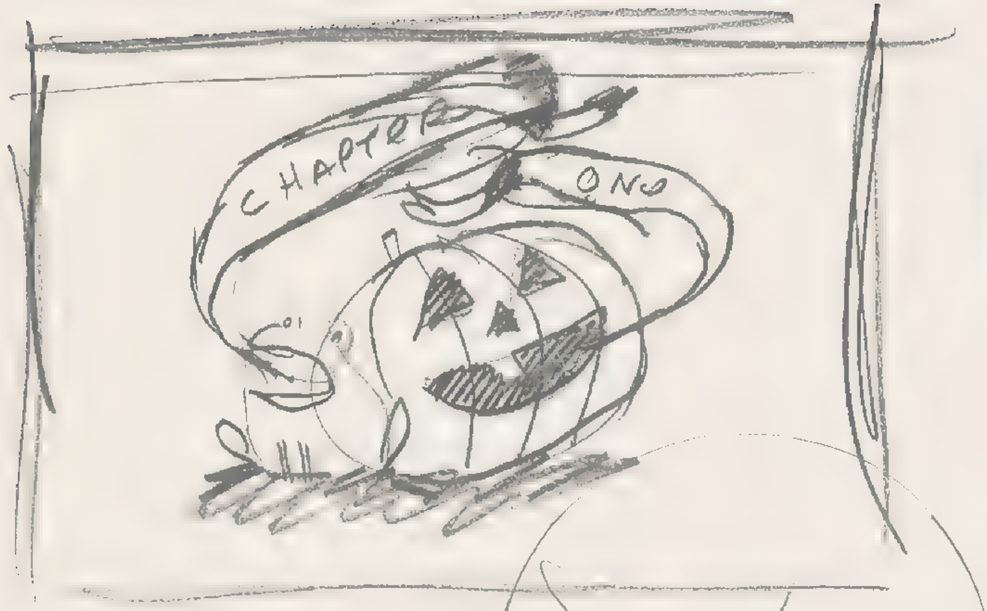
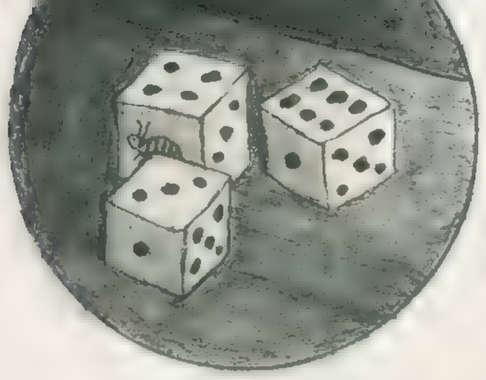
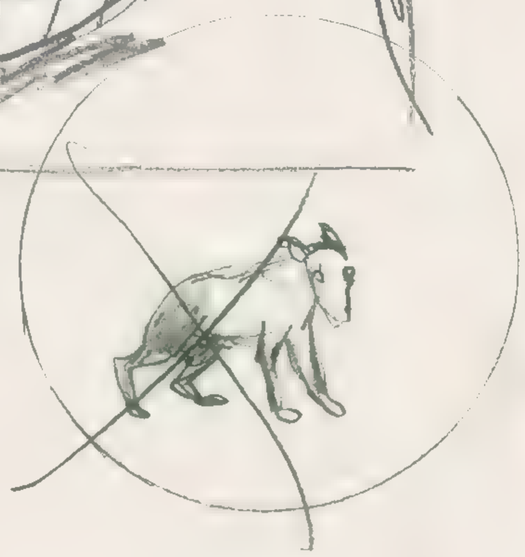
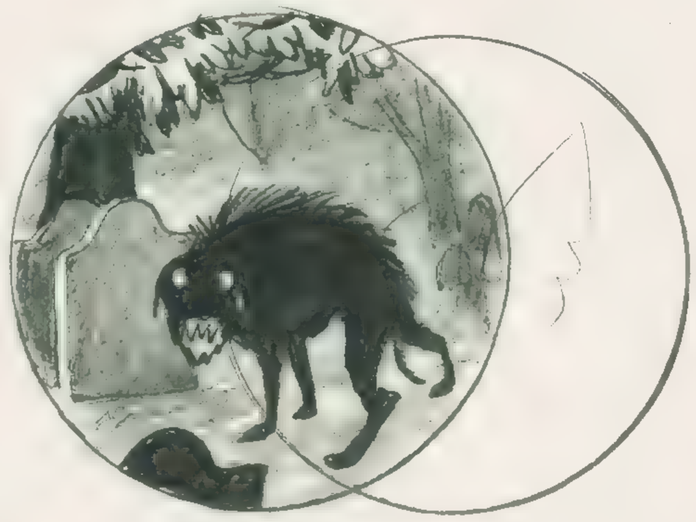
501/258

Background: Nick Cross

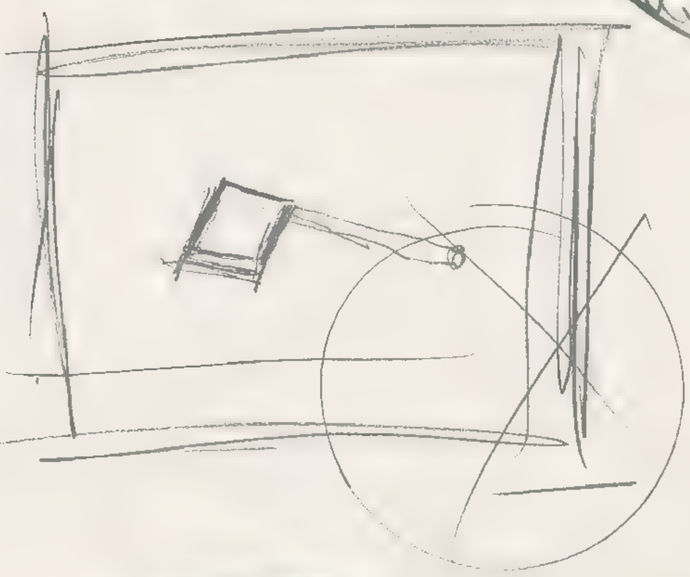


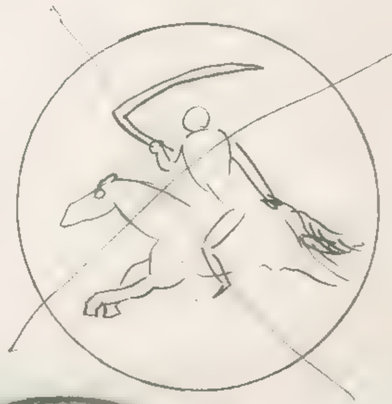


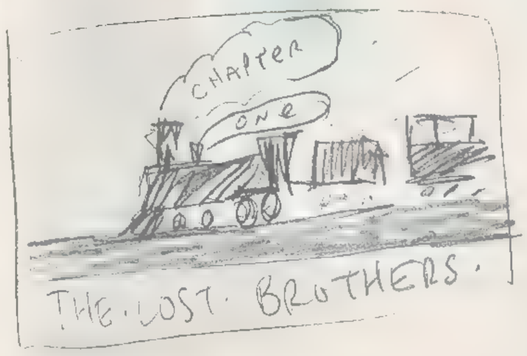


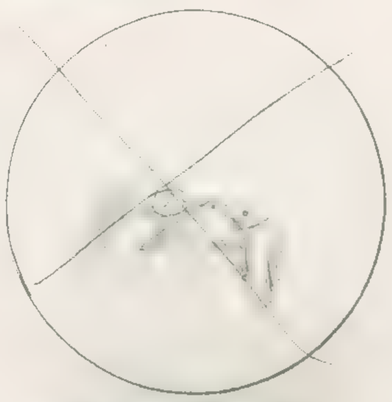


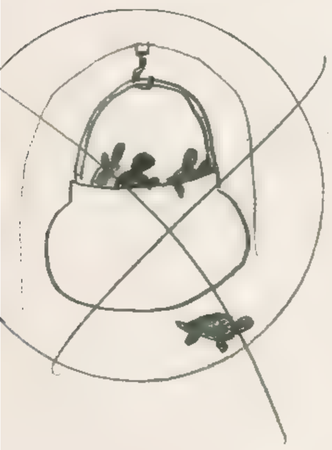
Make this nighttime?

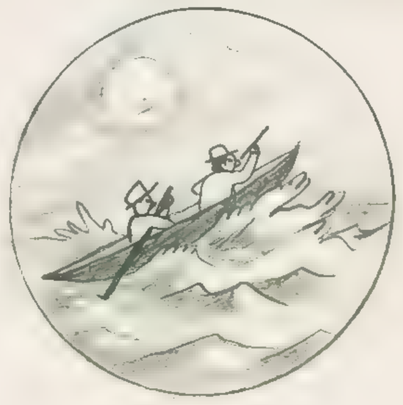






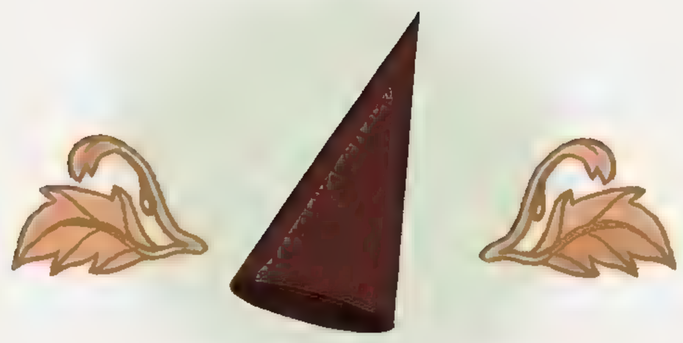






PM: The illustrations featured on the episode title cards were all created before the episodes were written, but many of them serve as symbols of the struggles within. The illustration of the two rowers in a boat, for example, was used in episode 10 to represent Wirt and Greg's journey together.

Art: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale. Opposite: Jim Campbell



"WHEN YOU WORK ON SOMETHING FOR A LONG TIME, YOU SEE ALL THE MISTAKES THAT ARE IN IT."

—Nick Cross

After the *Tome of the Unknown* pilot was released in September 2013, Cartoon Network ordered a miniseries from McHale, leaving the number of episodes to his discretion. McHale first envisioned eighteen chapters, but eventually settled on ten to accommodate budget, time, and scheduling constraints. Many of the cut ideas can be seen in *Tome of the Unknown*'s pitch bible, including tales of skinless witches and a villain who carves dice from kidnapped children's bones. The slimmer scope would help establish the folkloric, and occasionally grim, themes of McHale's vision without offering too much nightmare fuel for its adolescent audience. Fitting the ambitious story into ten eleven-minute episodes proved one of the hardest tasks that the showrunner faced, so he recruited his former CalArts classmate Amalia Levari and *Adventure Time* storyboard artist Tom Herpich to help assemble the narrative. The title also shifted to *Over the Garden Wall* after McHale abandoned the idea of a show structured around chapters of a mystical book.

Once production began in October 2013 McHale moved to Burbank, California, and hired Nick Cross as art director on the strength of his independent cartoons, including *Black Sunrise* and *The Pig Farmer*—works that also prioritized lavish, meticulous attention to backgrounds and otherworldly themes. To fill the need for storyboard artists, colorists, background artists, and other talent, the pair assembled an international group of freelancers—some without any animation experience. Most veteran professionals were already committed to shows with more traditional seasons, so McHale pulled former *Adventure Time* collaborators as well as cartoonists whose comics he admired. Each episode's credits shifted dramatically as artists wove into new positions to tackle emergent needs. To help kick off the show while McHale and his team scripted the episodes, Cross painted all of the backgrounds for "Hard Times at the Huskin' Bee," the first episode produced. Eventually, the team found all the storyboard artists needed for the show and got to work.

Art: Nick Cross

PM: The backgrounds in the pilot were beautifully drawn in pencil, but Nick and I knew it would be impossible to do that for a full miniseries. Just too much work for our crew and for the animation studio. I was also concerned that the simple characters didn't quite match the elaborate backgrounds. So we discussed ways of simplifying the backgrounds a bit without losing what made the pilot feel special. One of the first things we decided was to draw the layouts digitally rather than in pencil. To the left you can see one of Nick's first attempts at figuring out a process. It looks great, but I thought having thick black lines in the BG took away from the realism of the world. We also considered completely removing all the line work from both the characters and the backgrounds, but the characters would have ended up feeling too flat.

Art: Nick Cross

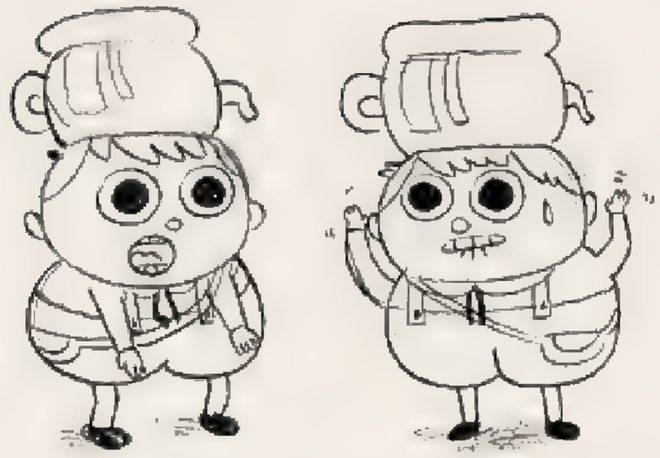
PM: Nick and I are both fans of the way black is used in early cinema. We thought using blocks of black in the backgrounds might be a nice way to reduce the amount of details drawn, and also make everything feel more dramatic. In the pencil layout to the left, you'll see little Xs where Nick marked areas that could be filled with pure black, while the rest of the image would have more details. Of course, when he did the final painting he ended up adding details everywhere because he's a maniac. But it was still a good way to approach simplifying the layouts. Nick also found a nicer digital line for these layouts that felt more like pencil.

On the opposite page you'll see the final painting process Nick put together for our background painters.

PM: For most of development I struggled with understanding the meaning of the Edelwood trees, and that uncertainty bled into the design. In early sketches Nick tried making them look gnarly and sinister. They looked amazing, but we realized they wouldn't stand out clearly enough in a dark, scary forest. So Nick tried making them glow, making them pure white, etc. Nothing seemed right. Finally we decided to try what seemed like the hackiest idea possible: put spooky faces on them, and color them like a modern horror video game. It looked perfect! It also helped us tie up some loose ends in the story.

Art: Nick Cross

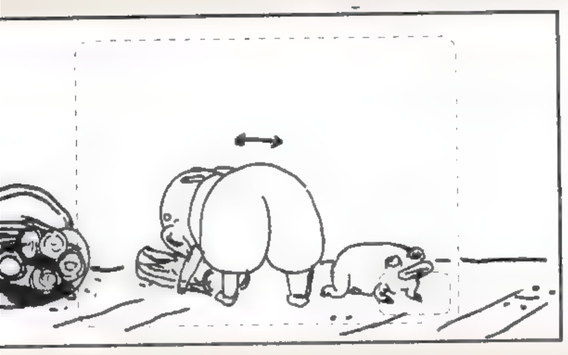
Natasha Allegri



Nick Edwards

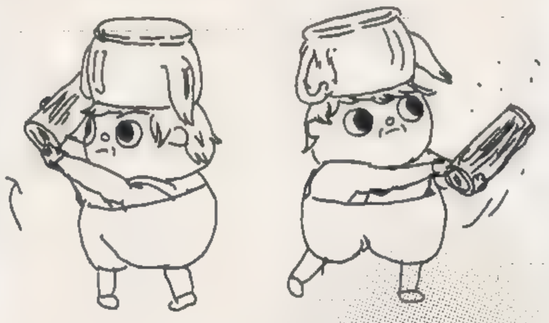
Pen Ward

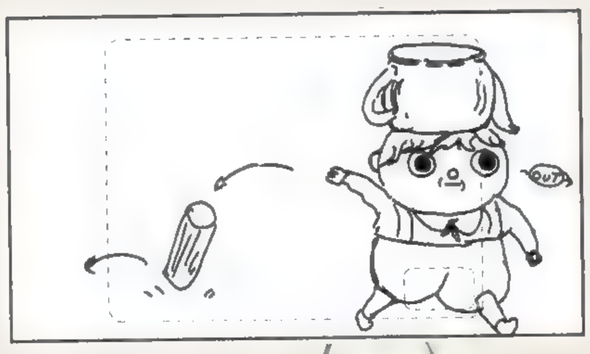
• thumbs under overalls
• wait dancing on table of empty plates



Steve Wolfhard

SLIGHT BUTT WAGGLE.





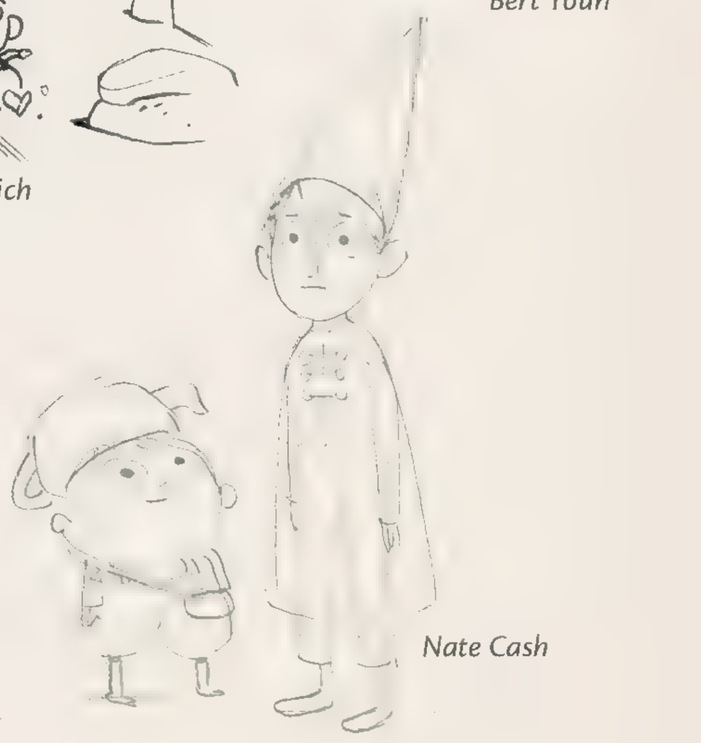
Zac Gorman

PM: When production started up, it was important to find storyboard artists and revisionists whose sensibilities matched the tone of the show. I asked everyone to send me sketches of the main characters to see what their first instincts looked like. Everyone approaches the characters differently.

Tom Herpich

Bert Youn

Nick Cross

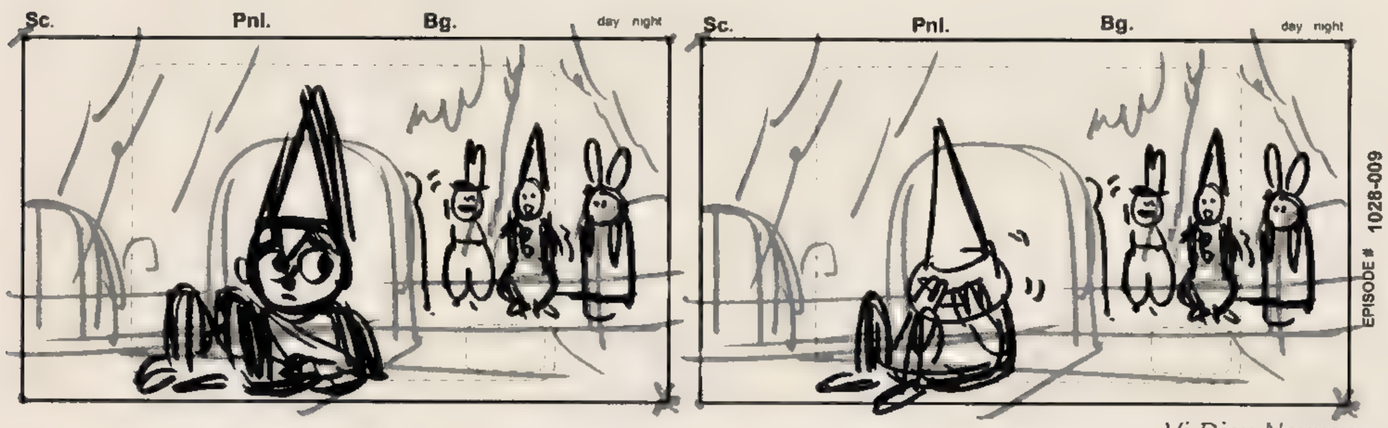


Nate Cash

Cole Sanchez

(B) YOU WATCHIN' That bee?

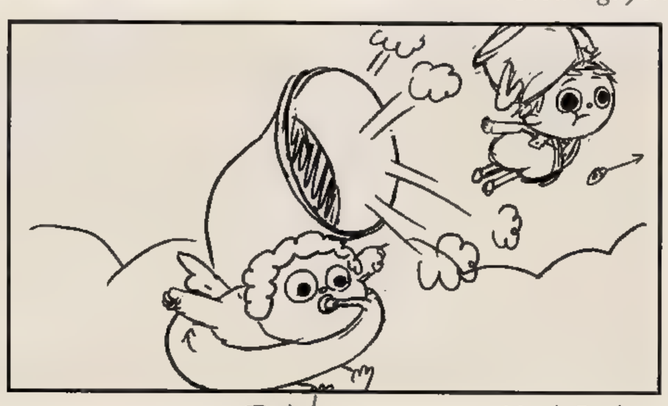
(W) Yeah



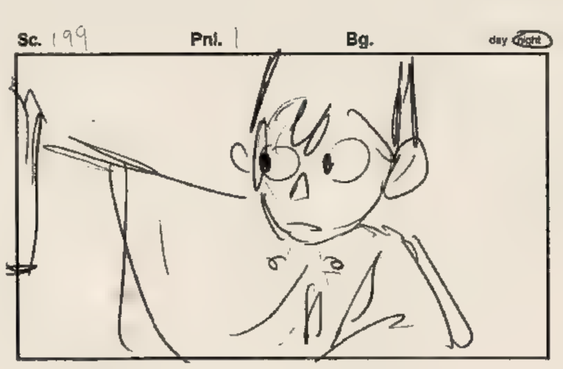
Vi-Dieu Nguyen

Jim Campell

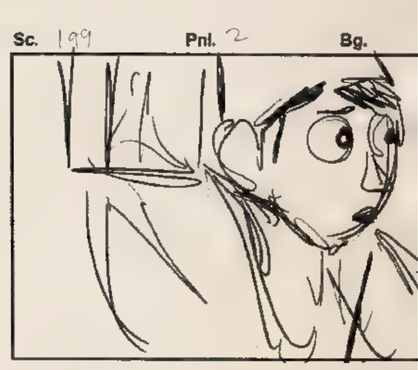
1028-003



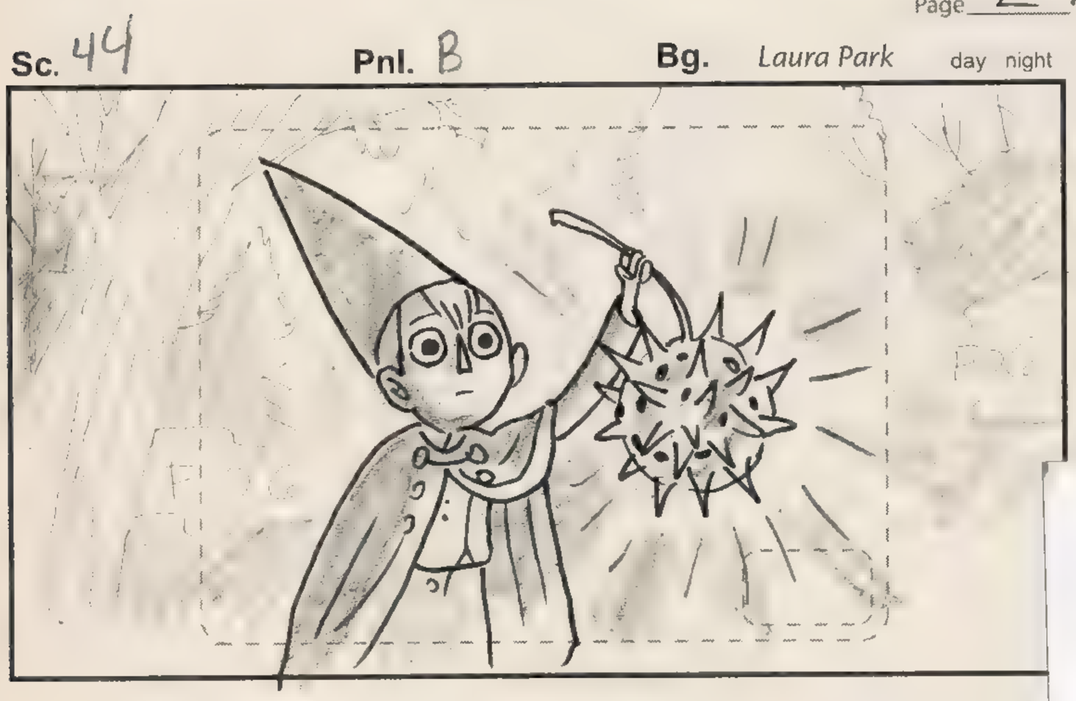
Mark Bodnar



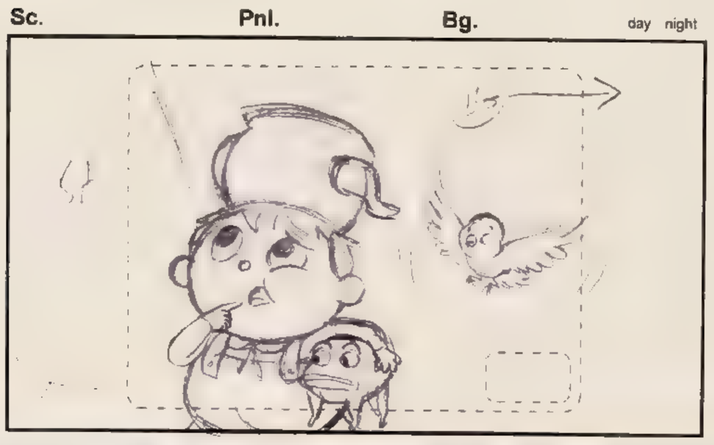
Steve MacLeod

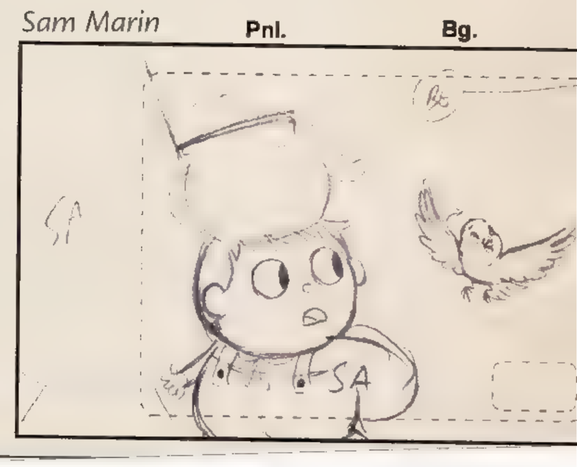


Page 24

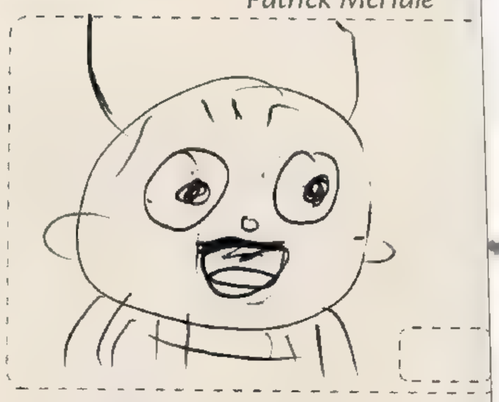


Patrick McHale

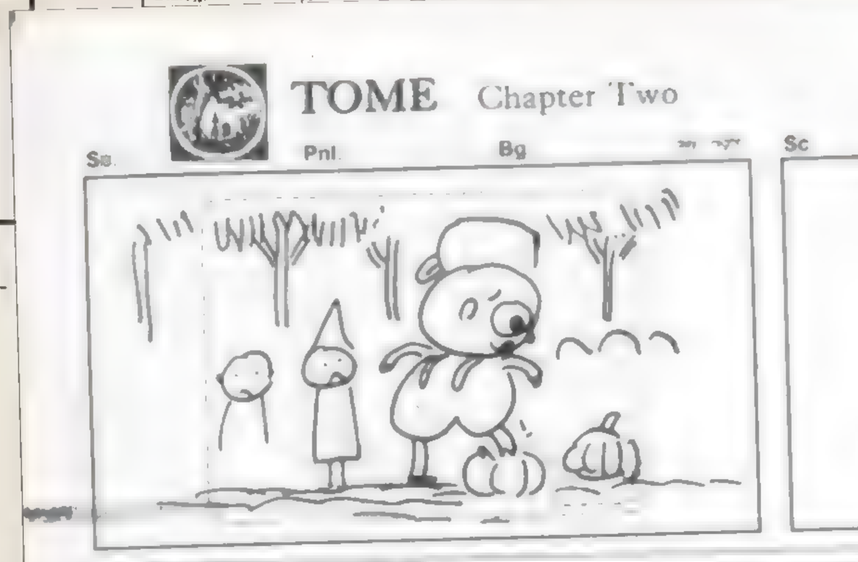




Fran Krause

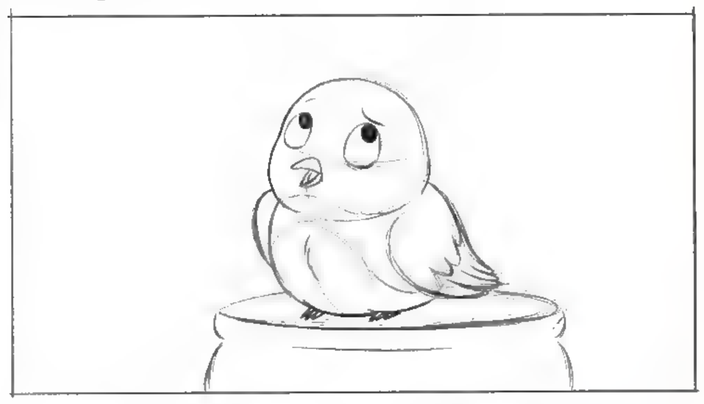


(G) Oh Boy! OK!



Aaron Renier

Examples:



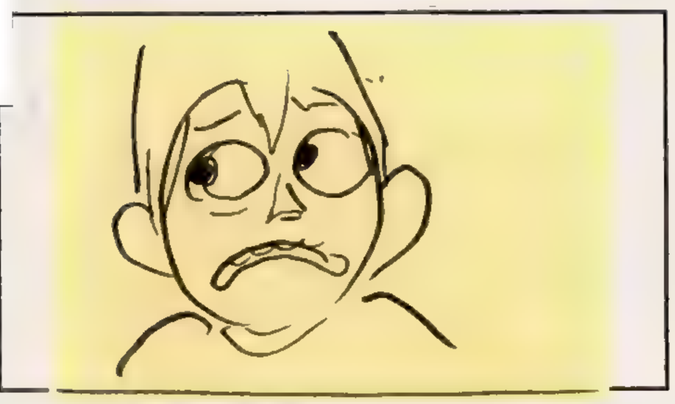
PM: In order for the final animation to look cohesive, we had to make guidelines for the storyboard artists, revisionists, and animators to follow. I made a reference packet to show the board artists how to approach their rough storyboards. Phil Rynda made a reference packet to illustrate how to best translate rough sketches into more finished looking character layouts.

Storyboard pose:

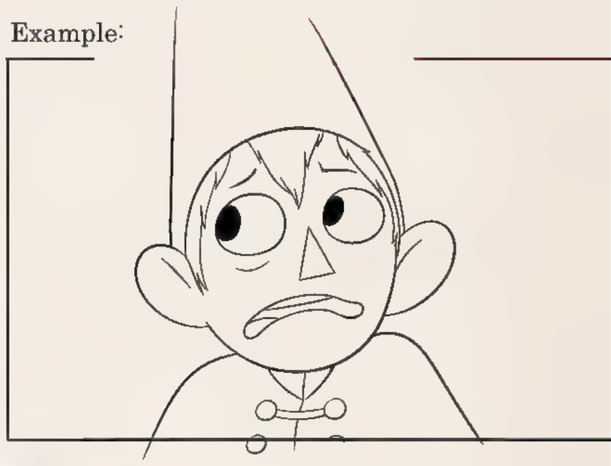
Example:

Example of how to translate rough storyboard drawing into character layout for animation:

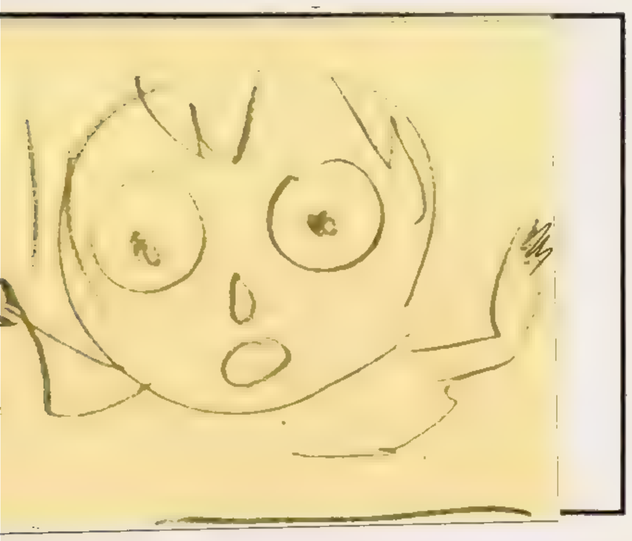
Storyboard:



Example:

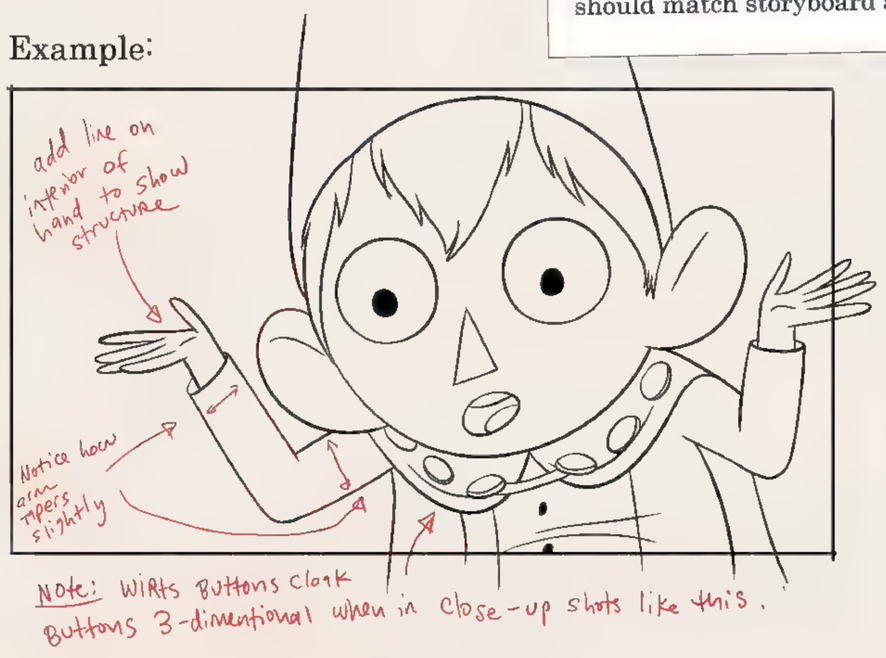


Details should follow model, but pose & expression should match storyboard as closely as possible.



It's important to follow the intention of the storyboards.

Example:


add line on interior of hand to show structure
Notice how arm tapers slightly
Note: Wrists Buttons cloak
Buttons 3-dimentional when in close-up shots like this.

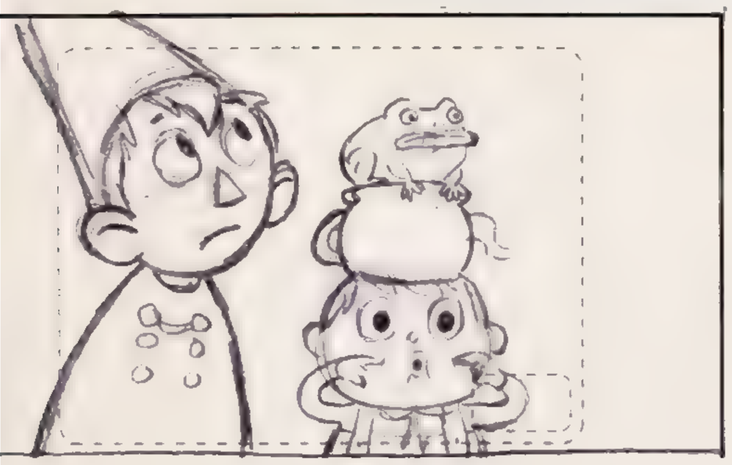
Also notice eye direction.

Example of translating storyboard to character layout:

Storyboard:

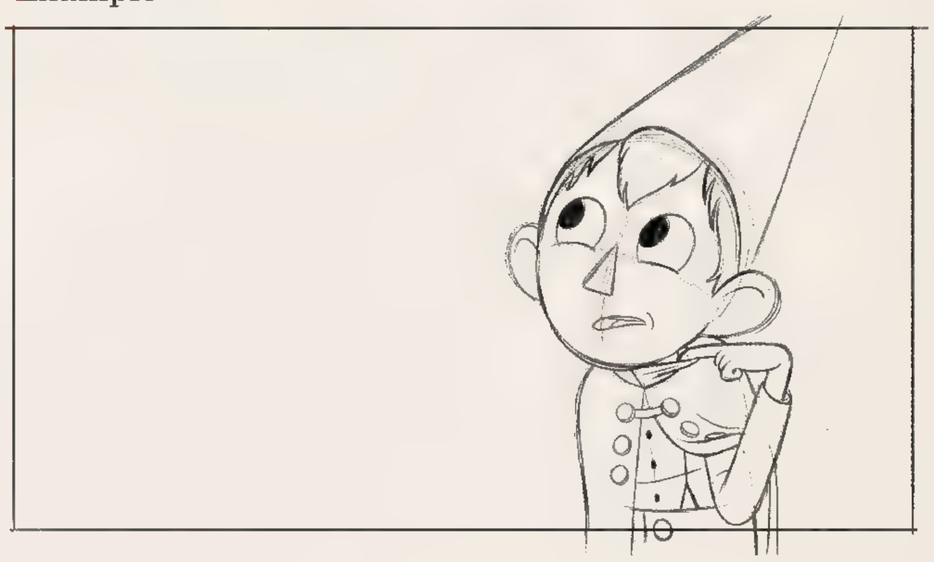
For medium and wide shots, no shadow is necessary, unless otherwise indicated in the storyboard.

yboard:



Example:

Example:



Character Design: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale, Phil Rynda. Animation Notes: Phil Rynda
Consumer Products Artwork: Jim Campbell

1:

Overall, perspective in this scene is great. but Mr. L's hand shouldn't exit the top of the screen.

mple:

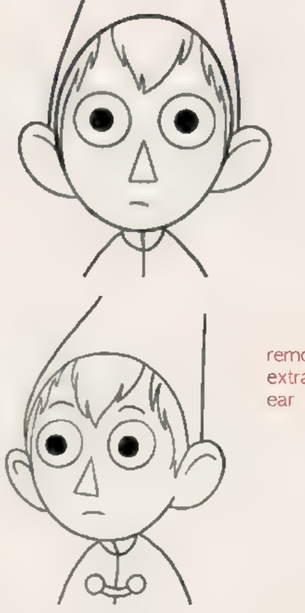
should be more like this.

Scene 120

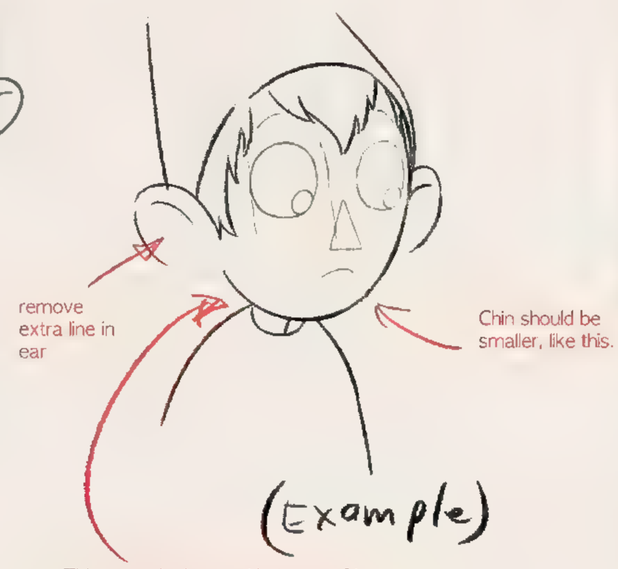
003 - Take 2 - scene 119

Scene 11: Not 6 a?

(Still)



(models)



remove extra line in ear

Chin should be smaller, like this.

(Example)

This scene looks good in terms of how much of Wirt's neck we can see, but here's an example of how it should look when the drawing is more finished. It usually looks best this way.

003 - Take 2 - scene 129

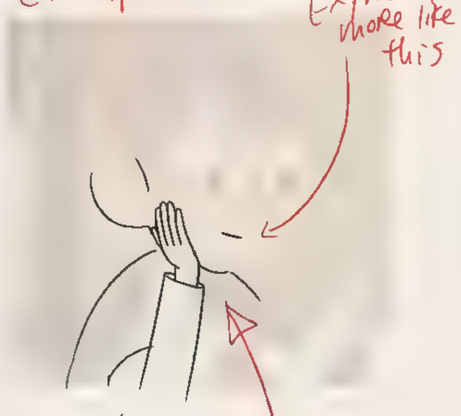
More like this

PM: Digital eMation came onboard to animate the miniseries, and they really put their all into the project to make it special. A lot of their work was just perfect right from the start, but when there are so many different people working on a show, there are bound to be inconsistencies and mistakes. When the animation didn't look quite right, we would give notes. To supplement our notes, we often sent sketches and visual reference to explain things as clearly as possible.

Take 1:

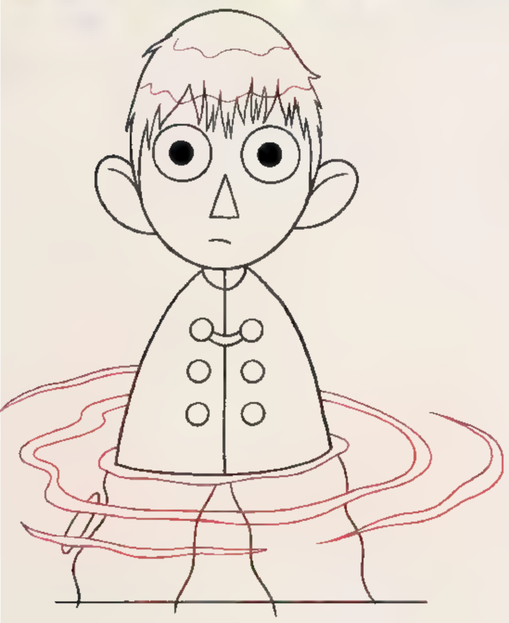
STORYBOARD:

Example:

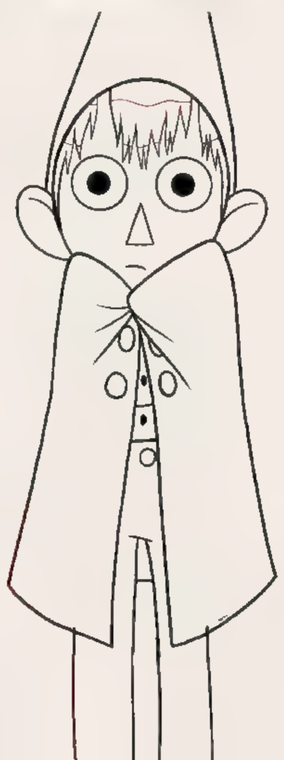


Expression more like this

hand & arm more like this



Character Models: Nick Cross, Phil Rynda
Animation Notes: Patrick McHale



Pencil Test:

Make sure eye is looking at skeleton

Lose extra line on ear

Watch construction here

expression should look more like this.

(Very Rough) Storyboard:

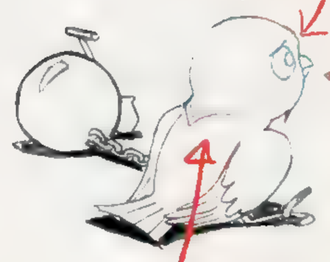
Example:

I realize it's hard to tell from the rough storyboard, but Beatrice should be looking at Wirt as he runs towards her.

Also, watch to make sure her cheeks don't get too puffy. Should look more like this.

Scene 136: Note 1

Pencil Test:



storyboard:

Example:

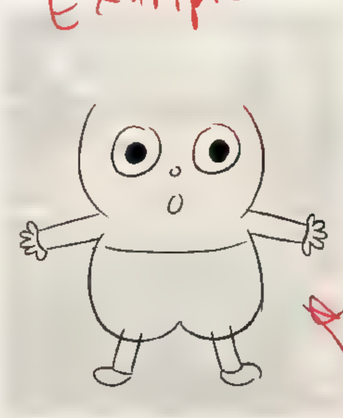
Scene 136: Note 5

Scene 27: Note 3

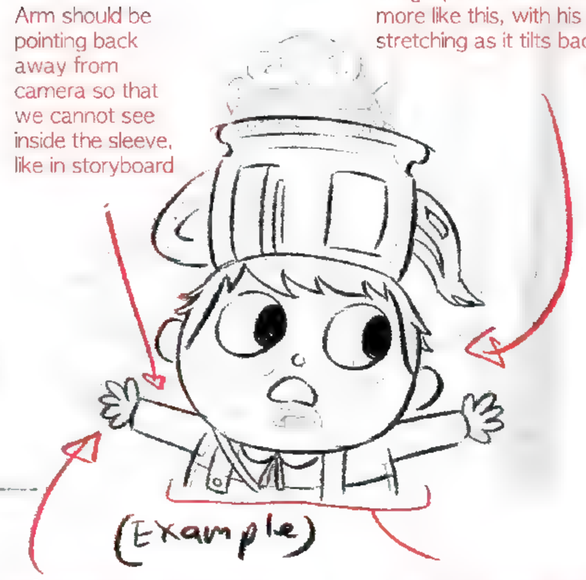
Take 1:

Storyboard:

Example:



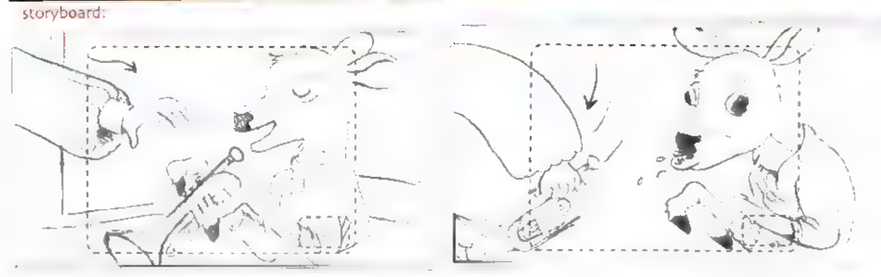
Scene 11: Note 5


Arm should be pointing back away from camera so that we cannot see inside the sleeve, like in storyboard
Greg's pose should look more like this, with his head stretching as it tilts back.
Greg's hands should be less realistic and more bubbly... like... a little rubber glove filled with water.
Body should be slightly wider to match model and storyboard
(Example)

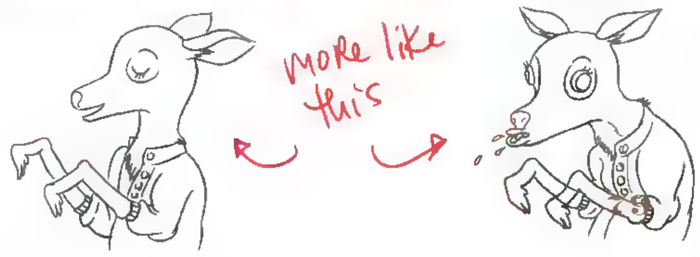
003 - Take 2 - scene 148

Take 1:

storyboard:



Example:



Background Layout: Clarke Snyder
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

Background: Nick Cross

Episode 1

"The Old Grist Mill"

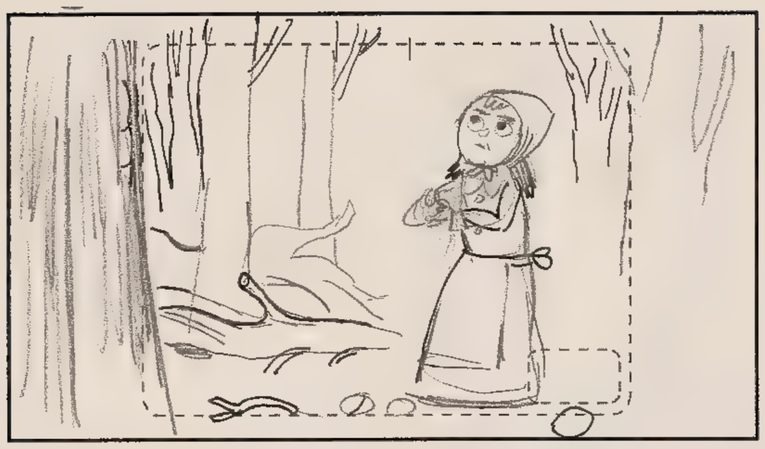
"Welcome to The Unknown, boys. You're more lost than you realize."

THE WOODSMAN

Before production of the miniseries started, Patrick McHale made significant changes to the story that had been lurking in his head since 2006. The story team of McHale, Amalia Levari, and Thomas Herpich scrapped the idea of a tome full of magical stories and replaced it with a more streamlined and organic arc, while still venturing into segregated fantasy realms. "The idea was to make it more like a story quilt," McHale explained, "with each episode being a different square of the quilt. Each episode was meant to feel very different from the others, but as a group they had to hang together as one cohesive thing."

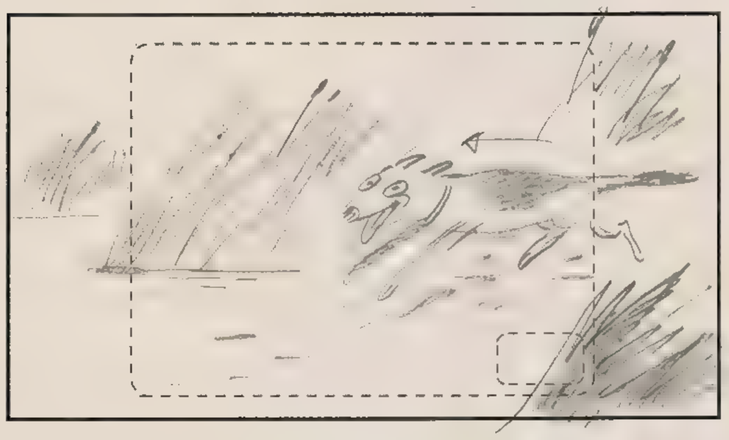
Because a miniseries is a short-term project, McHale and art director Nick Cross recruited a mix of freelancers. For the first episode—initially planned to recount Wirt and Greg's modern backstory—McHale invited *Magical Game Time* cartoonist Zac Gorman to storyboard alongside *Adventure Time* designer and *Bee and PuppyCat* creator Natasha Allegri.

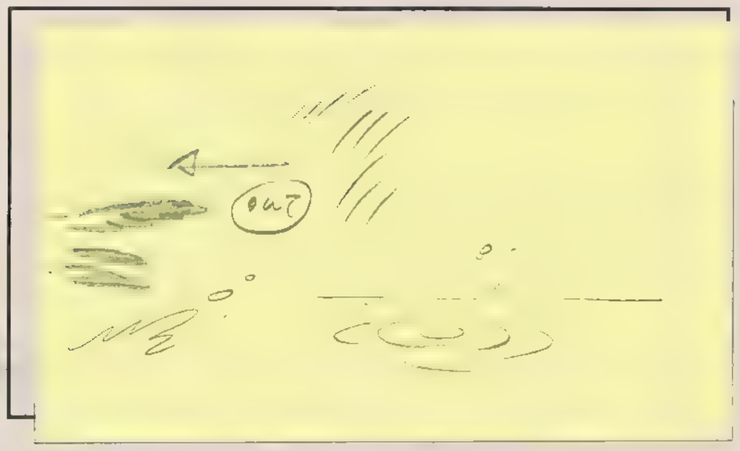
After a few passes of the storyboard, McHale grew concerned about showing Wirt and Greg getting lost from their suburban starting point, fearing the audience wouldn't become immersed in their fairytale exploits and would only wait for them to return to their home. Their backstory would be saved for the penultimate episode, "Into the Unknown," and instead Steve Wolfhard, another *Adventure Time* veteran, was brought on to overhaul the story by introducing the big black dog with beautiful eyes.



EPISODE # 1028-001

PM: For our episode 1 intro, I was inspired by the opening of The Rocky Horror Picture Show. I wanted to set a tone for the series without revealing any actual plot. Nick Cross did this pass of rough storyboards, many of which were not used. Above, Beatrice is throwing a rock at a bluebird, just like she told Wirt in episode 5. We never explain why she did this, but we did include hints in the series that her family had an interest in bluebirds.



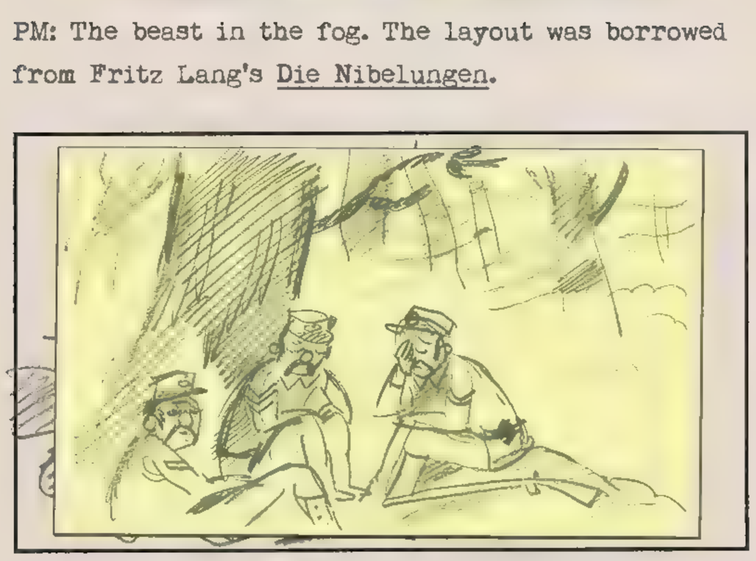


EPISODE # 1028-001

PM: Here we establish the dog from episode 1, and an early version of Beatrice's dad as a hunter.

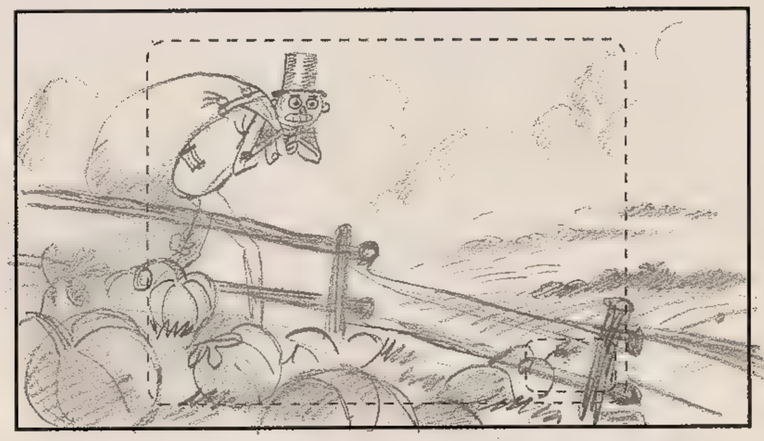
EPISODE # 1028-001

PM: The beast in the fog. The layout was borrowed from Fritz Lang's Die Nibelungen.



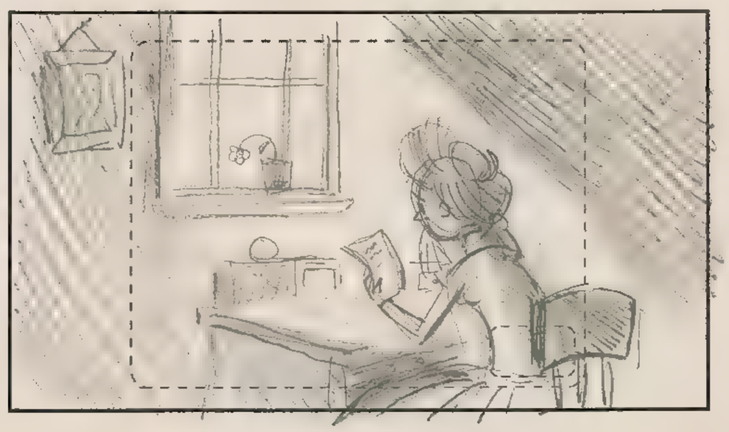
PM: This hints at a possible origin of the big Edelwood tree that Wirt burns down in chapter 4.

Storyboards: Natasha Allegri, Nick Cross, Zac Gorman, Steve Wolfhard, Bert Youn

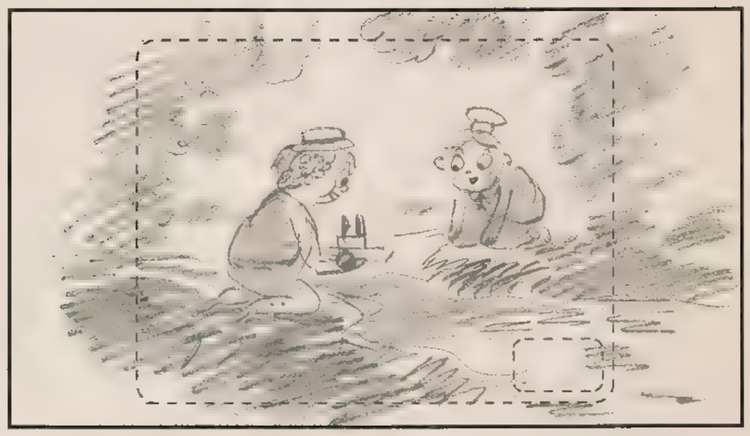


EPISODE # 1028-001

PM: This was an early concept of Enoch's backstory. Nick and I talked about the possibility of Enoch being some kind of drifter and cult leader who came to Pottsfield to take over the town and set up a death cult.



PM: Miss Langtree sadly reads a note from Jimmy.

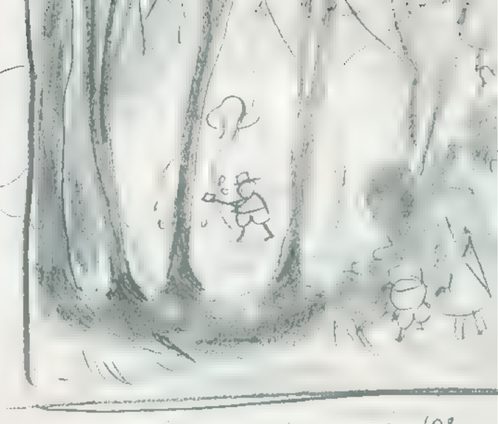


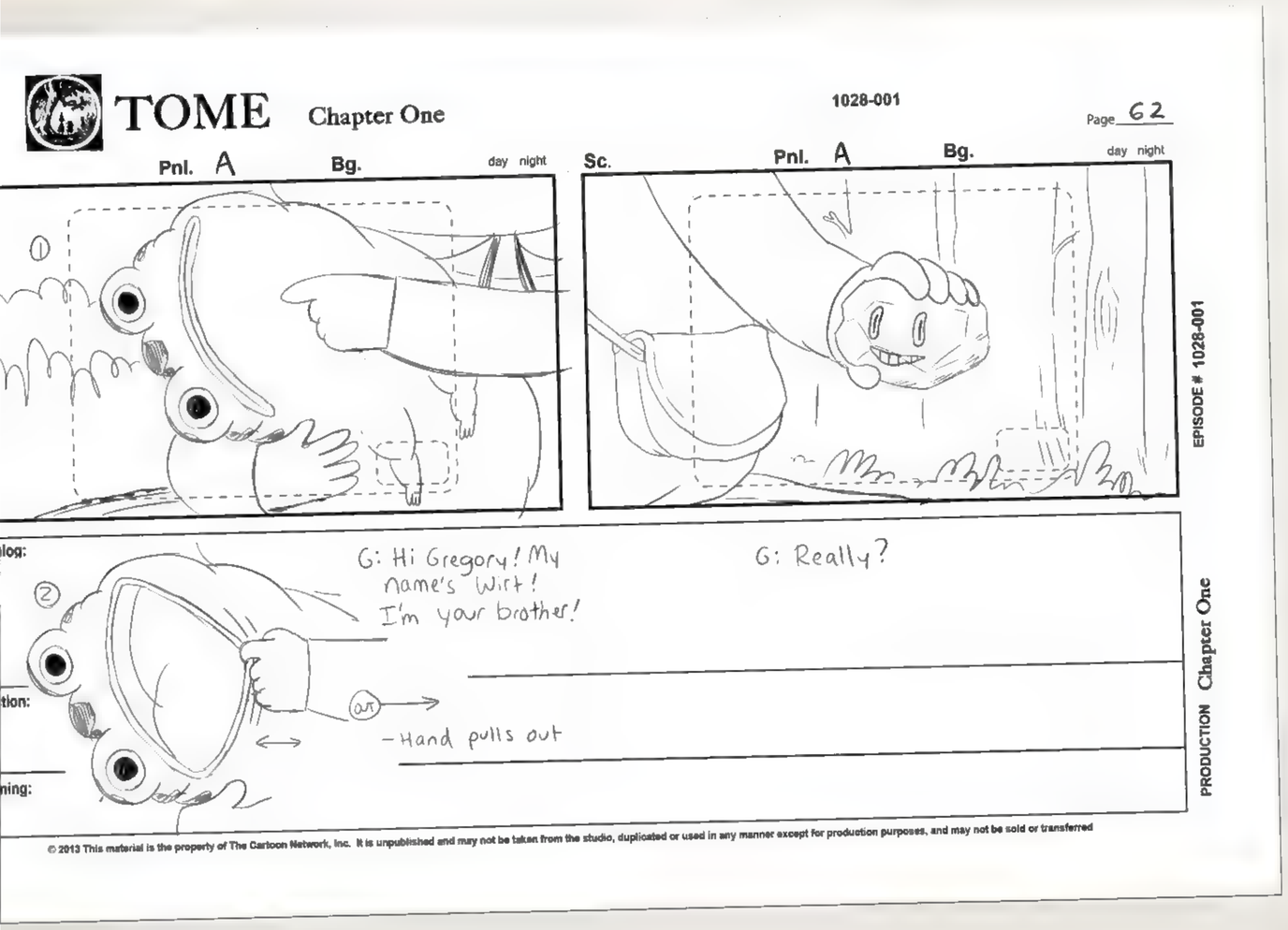
PM: There was a company called McLoughlin Bros., which made children's books and games throughout the 1800s. They were a big inspiration for the show, so Nick thought it'd be nice to give a nod to them in the intro; the idea is that these are the McLoughlin brothers themselves placing the little boat into the water.

PM: Endicott building his huge mansion.

PM: For most of production, the Edelwood tree's oil was sticky. Wirt tells Greg not to touch the tree, but then he turns and Greg is already plastered to it. Wirt tries to pull Greg free, and he gets stuck too. But why would oil be sticky? Didn't make sense. At the last minute, after the episode was fully animated, I cut a bunch of scenes and made Nick reanimate bits and pieces to fill in the gaps, bless his soul.

NC: After Pat reboarded this scene, there were other parts of the episode that didn't work. Greg threw a bunch of candy that stuck to the tree, and the dog ate an Edelwood stick with the candy. I asked, "What does he swallow now?" and we said, "Why not make it a turtle?" So we had to have Greg put the candy on a turtle.




TOME
Chapter One
1028-001
Page 62
Pnl. A
Bg.
day night
Sc.
Pnl. A
Bg.
day night
EPISODE # 1028-001
G: Hi Gregory! My name's Wirt! I'm your brother!
G: Really?
-Hand pulls out
PRODUCTION Chapter One
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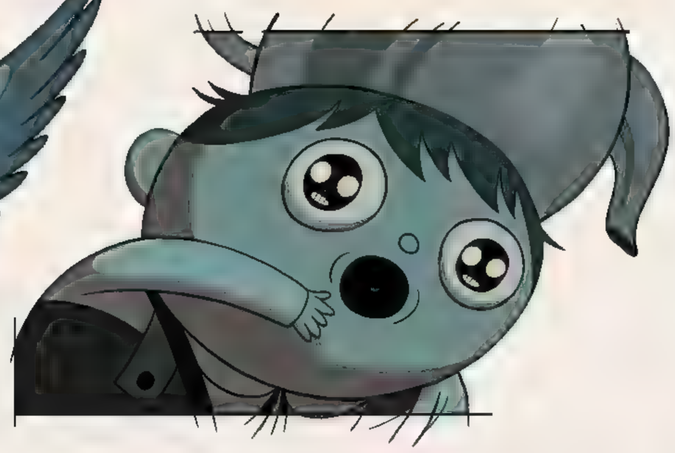
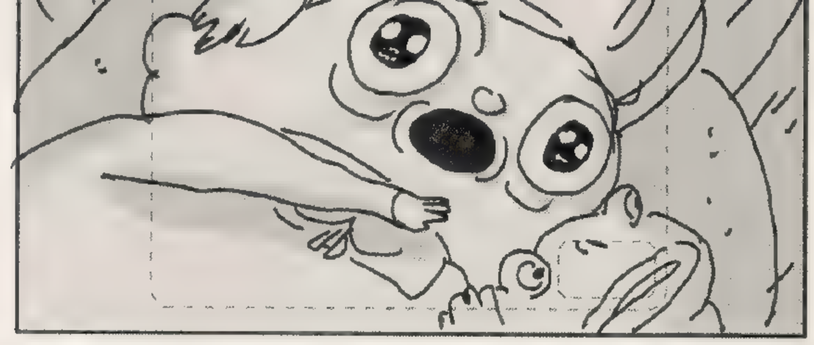
PM: In the first incarnation of the storyboard, Greg and Wirt regale the Woodsman with their backstory, with Greg's version of events veering into pure fantasy. Zac Gorman had Greg tell his story using ridiculous voices and makeshift puppets: his frog and a random rock with a face on it. That was the genesis of what would become the "Rock Facts" rock! It was just a gag at the time, but that rock ended up becoming an important part of the overarching story.

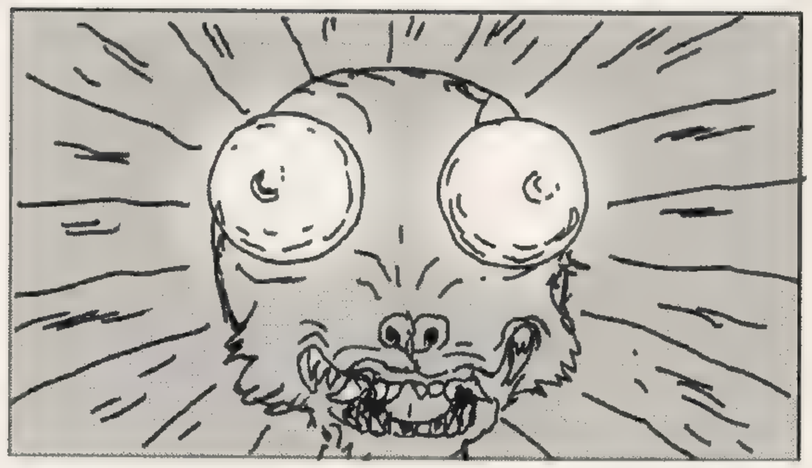
Natasha Allegri: I think this is the best drawing I ever did of the Woodsman. And the best drawing of a man I've ever done. Also, he's holding his axe backwards . . . Wow. What a noob woodsman.

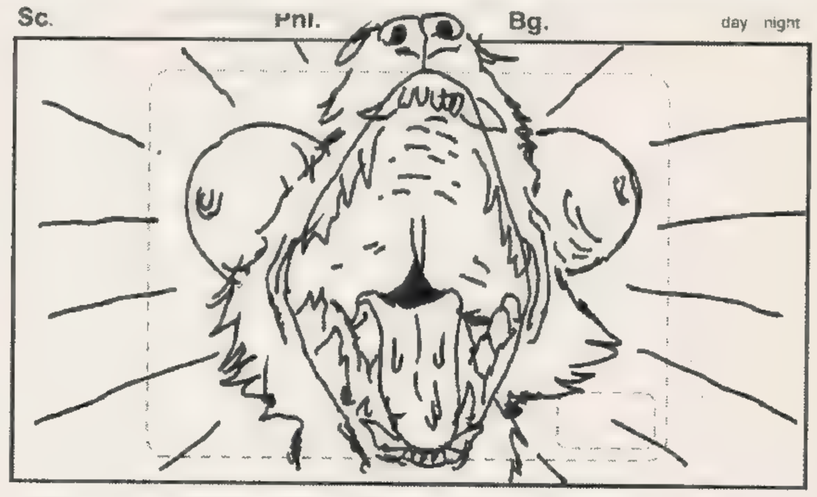
PM: Steve Wolfhard, who storyboarded the episode, had to figure out what the mill should look like. He came up with the size relationship of the big mill and the little house with a big chimney. I loved his original design, but I thought it needed to look a bit more American.

PM: I had read a folktale about the devil appearing as a large black dog to guard buried treasure, so I wanted to include a large black dog somewhere in the series. Later I saw an old illustration from the Hans Christian Andersen story "The Tinderbox." I'd never actually read the story, and didn't know what the image was from, but I loved those huge, glowing eyes and asked Steve Wolfhard to incorporate that concept into his boards. Originally the dog was also spewing snakes and lizards and bats out of its mouth, but it was a bit too overwhelming.

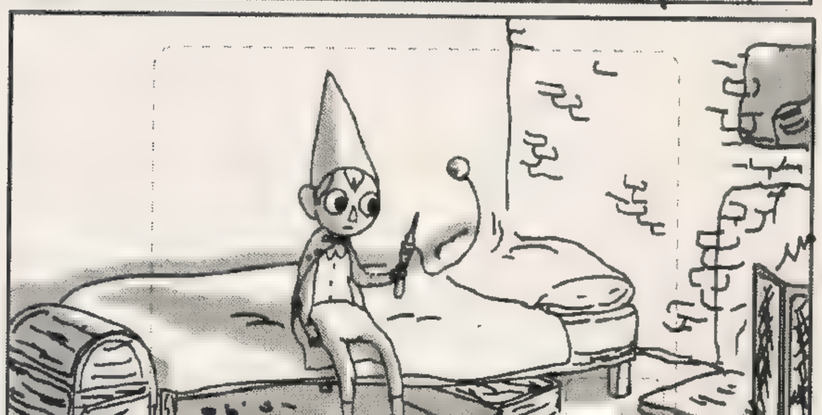








TOME Chapter One



PM: This image of the Edelwood tree was partially inspired by a shot of a signpost in the Disney short The Legend of Sleepy Hollow . . . At least I think it's from that film.

The image to the right is the first time we really see Beatrice. It was meant to feel a bit like when the Cheshire Cat is sitting on a branch above Alice.

Character Design: Nick Cross. Prop Design: Nick Cross, Dylan Forman. Storyboards: Steve Wolfhard
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis. Background Painting: Nick Cross, Levon Jihanian
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler. Color Styling: Camille Stancin. Art Direction: Nick Cross

Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Nick Cross, Levon Jihanian

Background: Nick Cross

Episode 2

"Hard Times at the Huskin' Bee"

"By the order of the Pottsfield Chamber of Commerce, I find you guilty of trespassing, destruction of property, disturbing the peace, and . . . murder."

—ENOCH

Patrick McHale: One of the early ideas of Pottsfield was inspired by an old postcard. The town grew cabbages, and from those cabbages babies were born. But the twist is that to grow their cabbages, these townsfolk murder people and bury them in the ground like seeds. They say, "It's the circle of life," but Wirt and Greg don't want to be murdered and turned into little cabbage babies.

Another version of the story felt more like a Christmas pantomime, where everyone looks like they have big heads but they're actually just wearing costumes . . . and there's something sinister beneath the costumes. After a long writing process, we combined and simplified all the ideas, and added the harvest-festival angle to make it feel more autumnal. I knew that most of the episodes weren't going to feel exactly like Halloween, so we needed at least one episode that really made the show feel like a Halloween special.

Nick Cross: "Hard Times at the Huskin' Bee" was actually the first episode we completed. After finishing the pilot, I didn't hear anything for a while. And then, out of the blue, Pat contacted me and said, "Hey, do you want to come down and art direct the series?" So we packed up and moved from Canada. When I got to Los Angeles, it was just Pat, a producer, and me in the office. That was the entire crew. I was used to starting a show with tons of people.

I ended up doing all of the backgrounds for this episode, which is good, because I think this one informs the look for the whole series: fall, warm colors, set out in nature with woods and farms. When we started bringing in other artists, we could show them that this is what it's supposed to look like.

Scene #1 Duration Disc Panel 1 Duration Disc

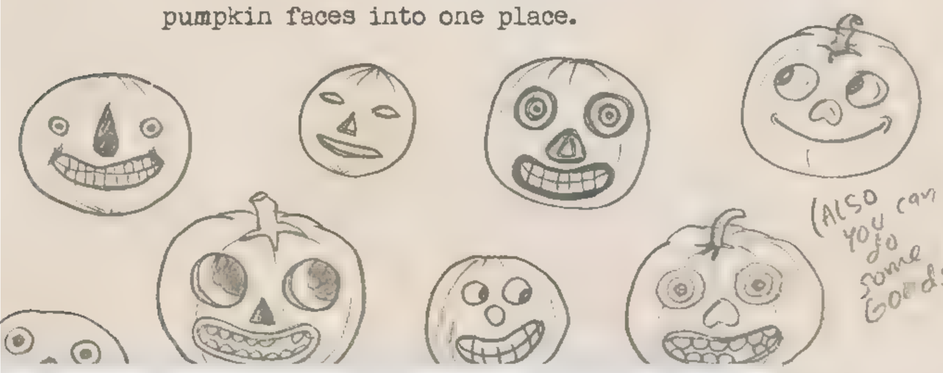
Dialog
Pumpkin Gal: Folks don t tend to "pass through" Pottsfield.

Pump 8

MISC.
~~GENERIC GAL~~

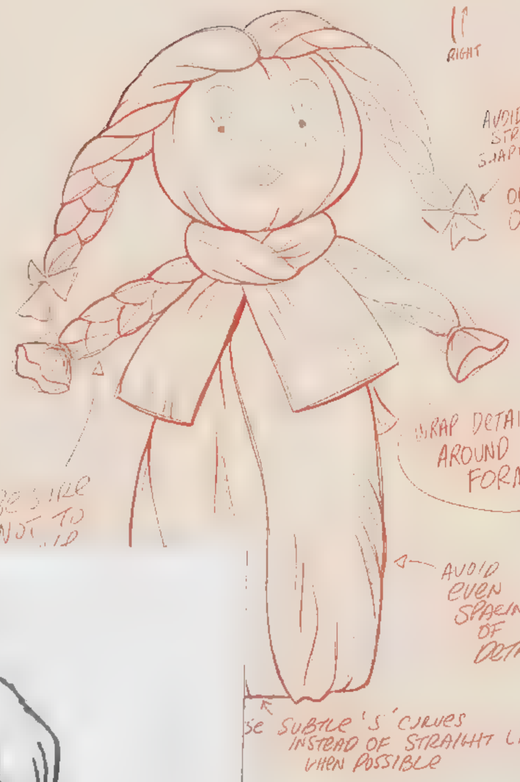
Pumpkin Faces

PM: These sketches are based on postcards. I was trying to put all the different styles of Victorian pumpkin faces into one place.



★ GENERAL NOTE:
BE SURE TO MAKE DETAILS THAT DON'T CONNECT STILL POINT AT EACH OTHER TO HELP DEFINE THE FORM.

RIGHT WRONG

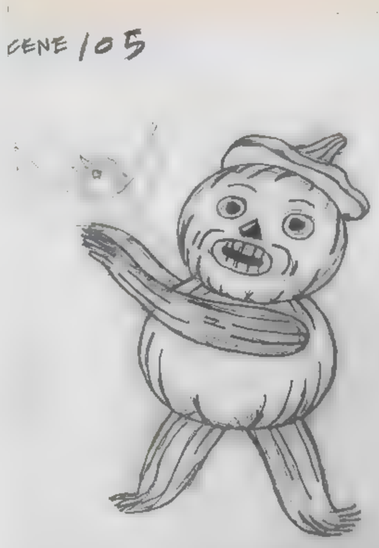

AVOID STRAIGHT LINES + SNAPP CORNERS ON ORGANIC OBJECTS.
WRAP DETAILS AROUND FORM
AVOID EVEN SPACING OF DETAILS
USE SUBTLE 'S' CURVES INSTEAD OF STRAIGHT LINES WHEN POSSIBLE

PM: Much of our crew was freelance, but we were lucky enough to get Miranda Dressler on staff as our in-house character cleanup artist for the series. Early on she did this test, and Nick did a draw-over to show how it could be improved.

PM: Graham came up with so many fun, strange pumpkin people. The one with the baby was the most unexpected. It seems so cute . . . unless you know the story.

NC: A lot of the pumpkin people's designs were based on Halloween postcards from the 1800s. Pat was really insistent that they were old-style pumpkins, painted instead of carved. We hired character designer Graham Falk to draw a million pumpkin characters. For the ten designs you see onscreen, there are probably hundreds of sketches.

Pumpkin Man: Say, you folks ought to don your vegetables and celebrate the harvest with us.

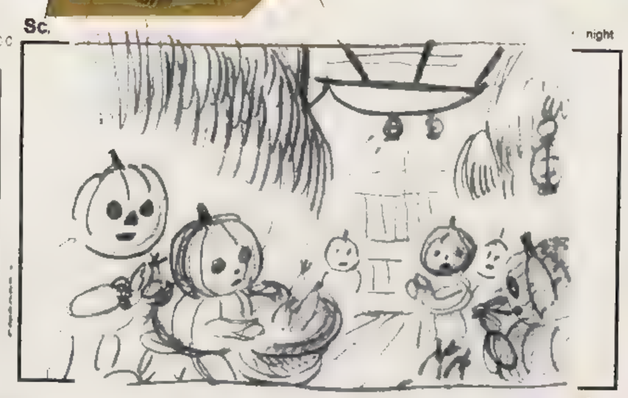


PM: Enoch's final design looked very similar to my early sketch above, but the townspeople changed substantially. In this sketch they are dressed in human costumes to cover their pumpkin costumes, which cover their skeleton bodies. Obviously that was far too complicated.

Follow P0025068_389 for design of jug

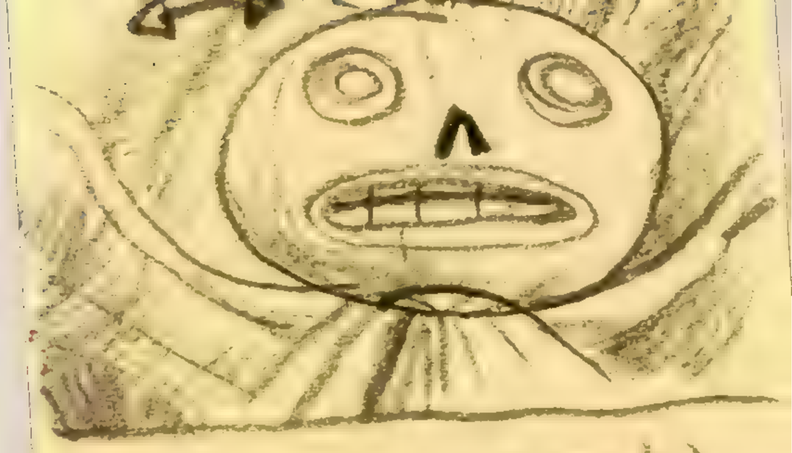
Scene 57 Duration 02:00 Panel 1 Duration 01:00

Sc. night



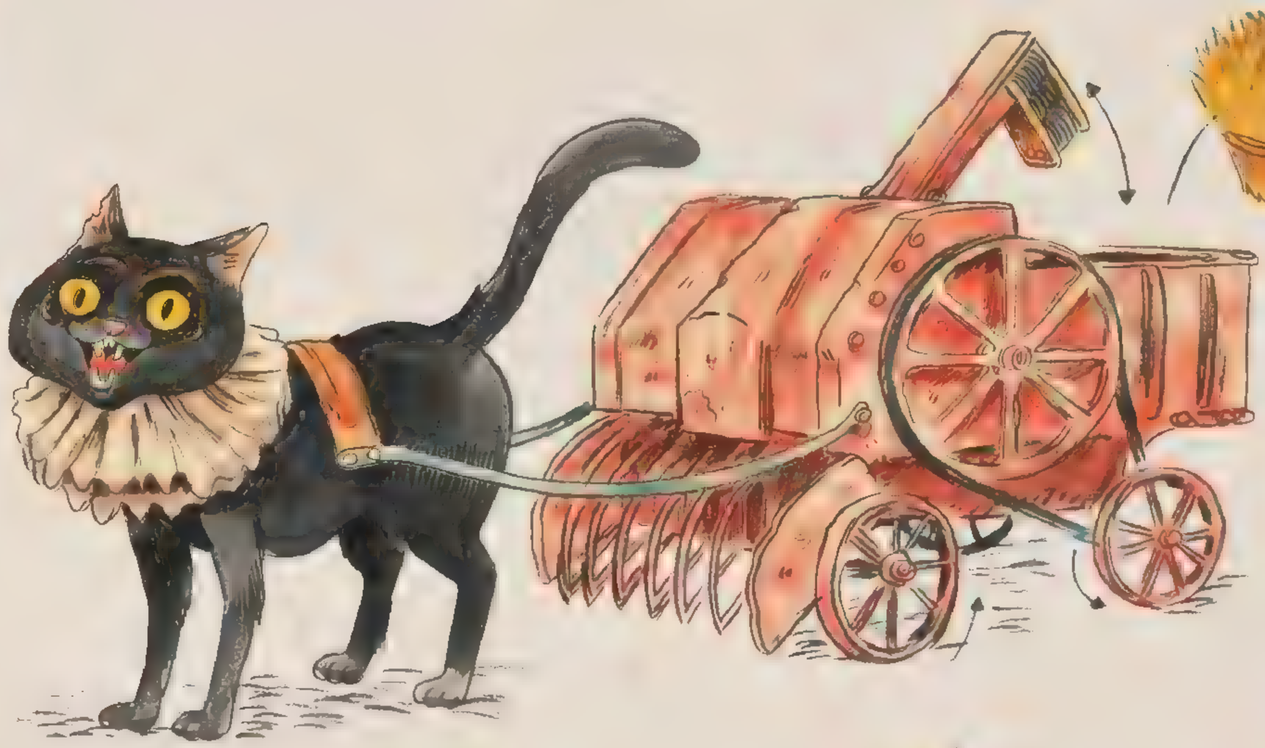
[SHUCKING CORN]

Painting: Nick Cross. Character Design: Nick Cross, Graham Falk
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler. Color Styling: Carol Wyatt. Art Direction: Nick Cross



(creak ~ creak)
(wise cohorts)

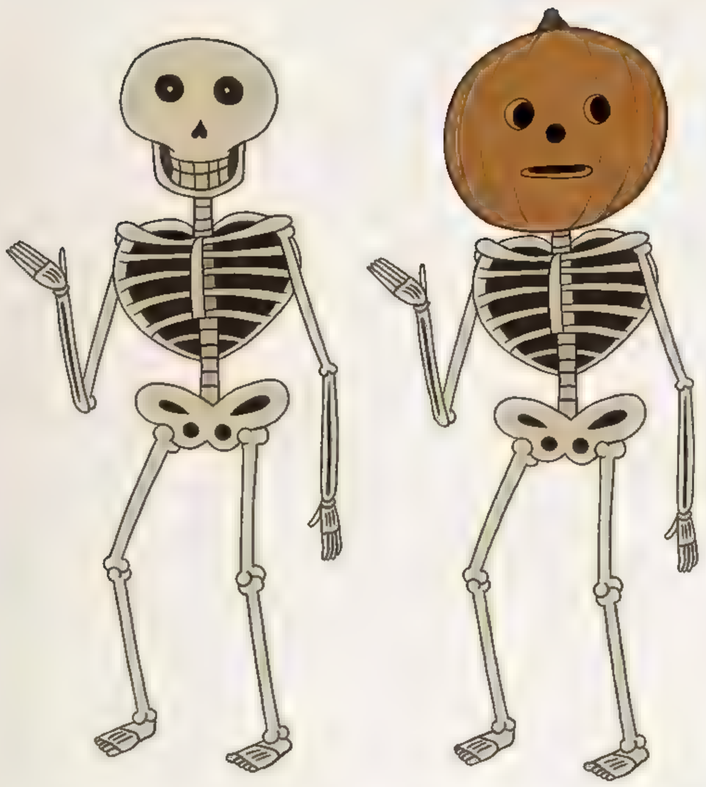
PM: It's unclear whether or not the cat is Enoch himself. We made sure you never saw Enoch talking while the cat was onscreen. Maybe he's like the Wizard of Oz. Maybe not. Cats can't talk.

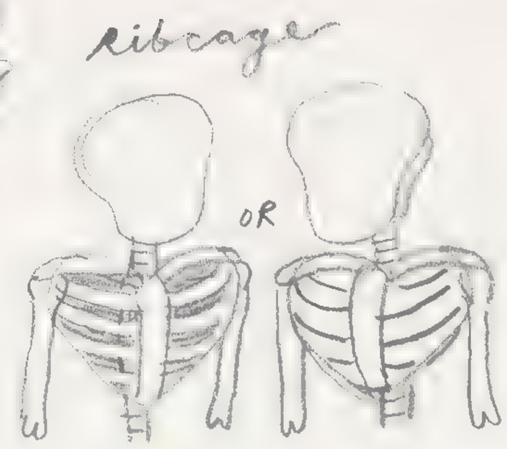


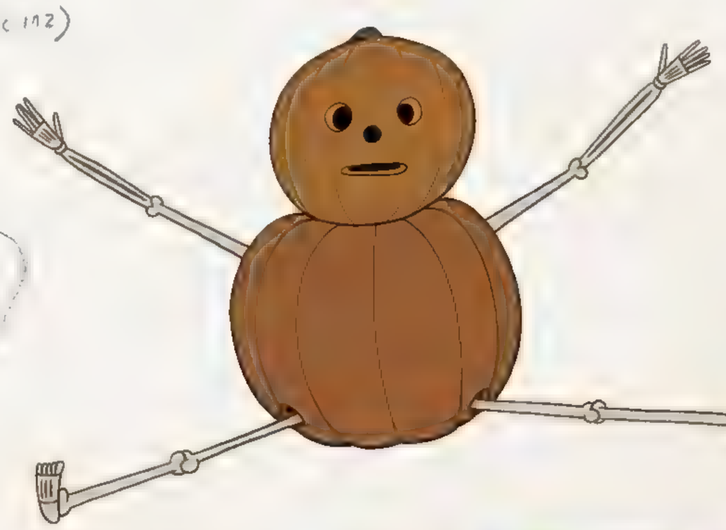
PM: Enoch's design was meant to be a mix of a pumpkin, an apple, a skull, a Maypole, a poppet, and possibly some other things. It doesn't make much sense, but it feels right for Halloween.

Aaron Reiner, one of the storyboard artists, did these beautiful development paintings. They didn't get used in the series, so it's nice we can include them here!

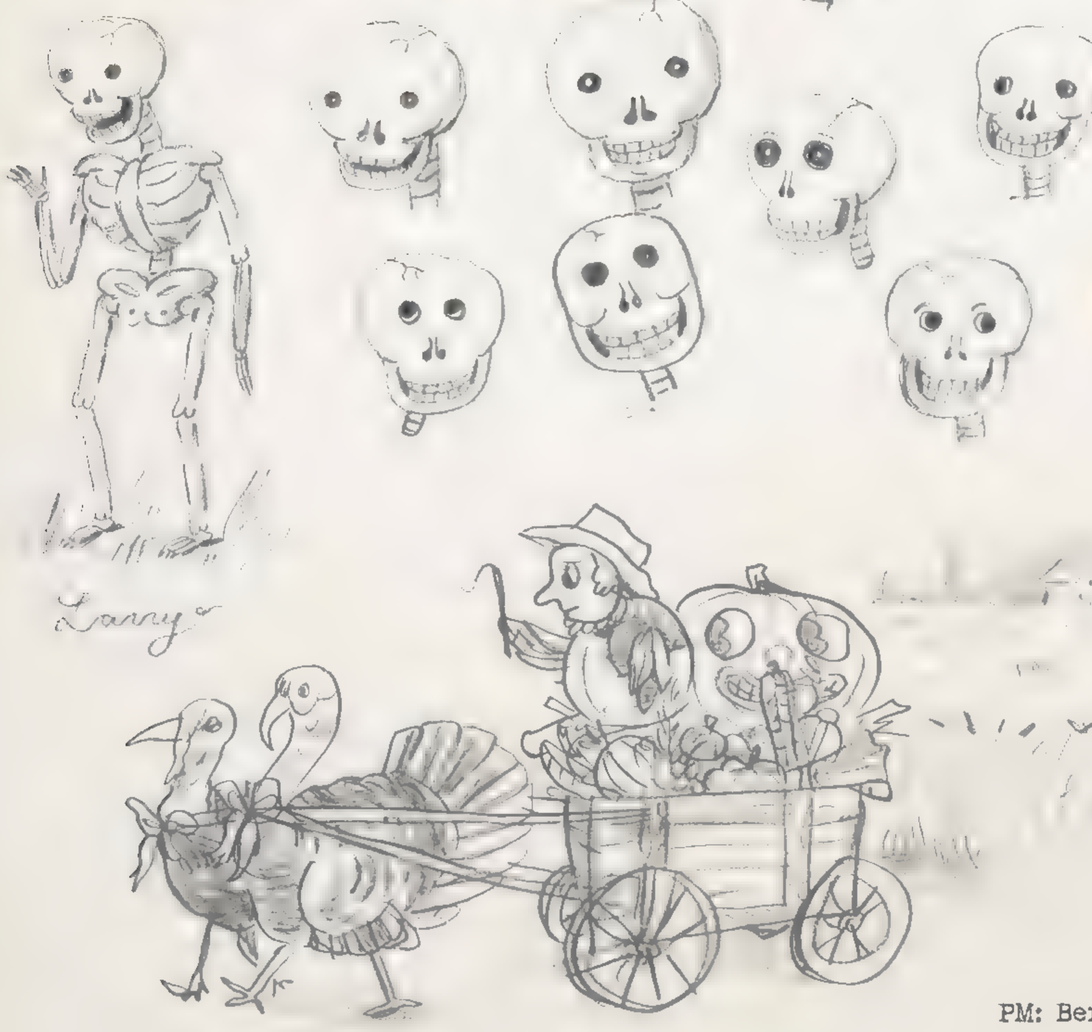
Paintings: Aaron Reiner. Character Design: Nick Cross, Graham Falk, Seo Kim
Prop Design: Nick Cross Storyboards: Bert Youn
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler
Color Styling: Carol Wyatt. Art Direction: Nick Cross

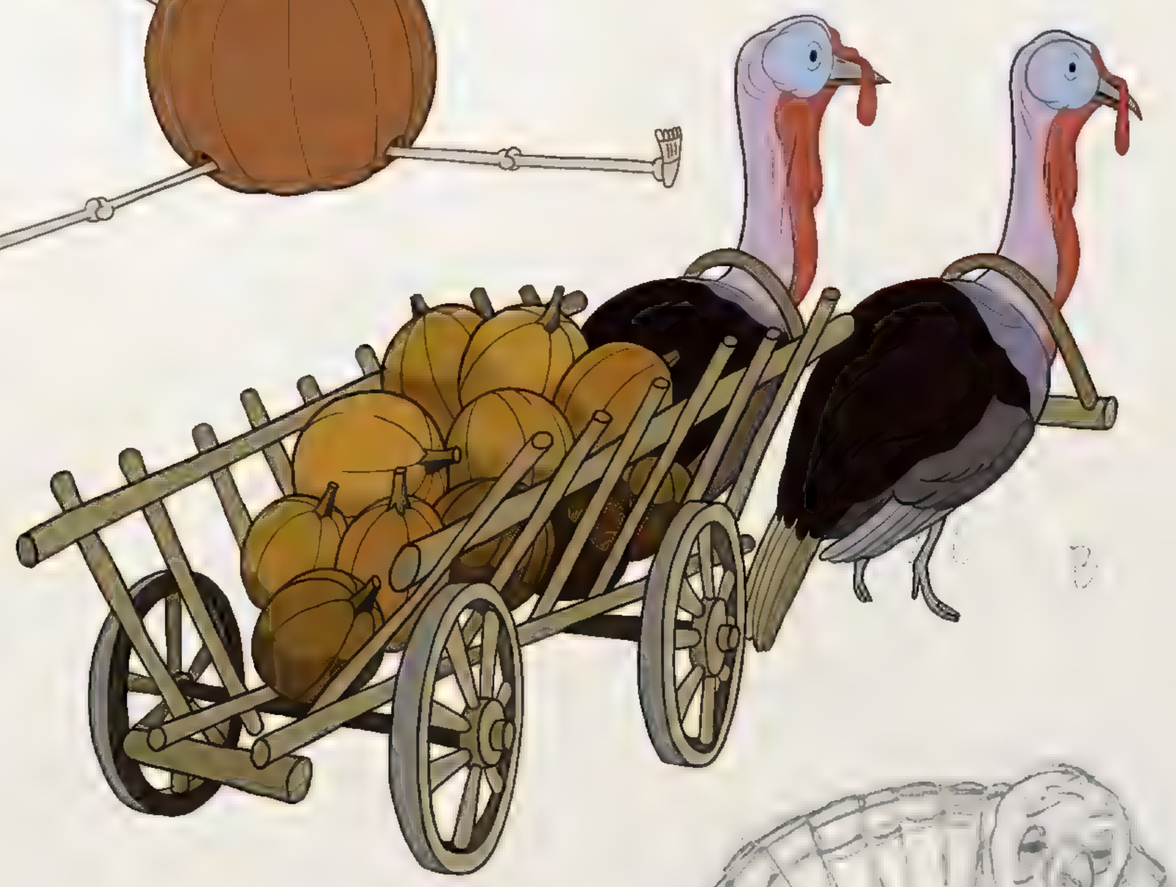




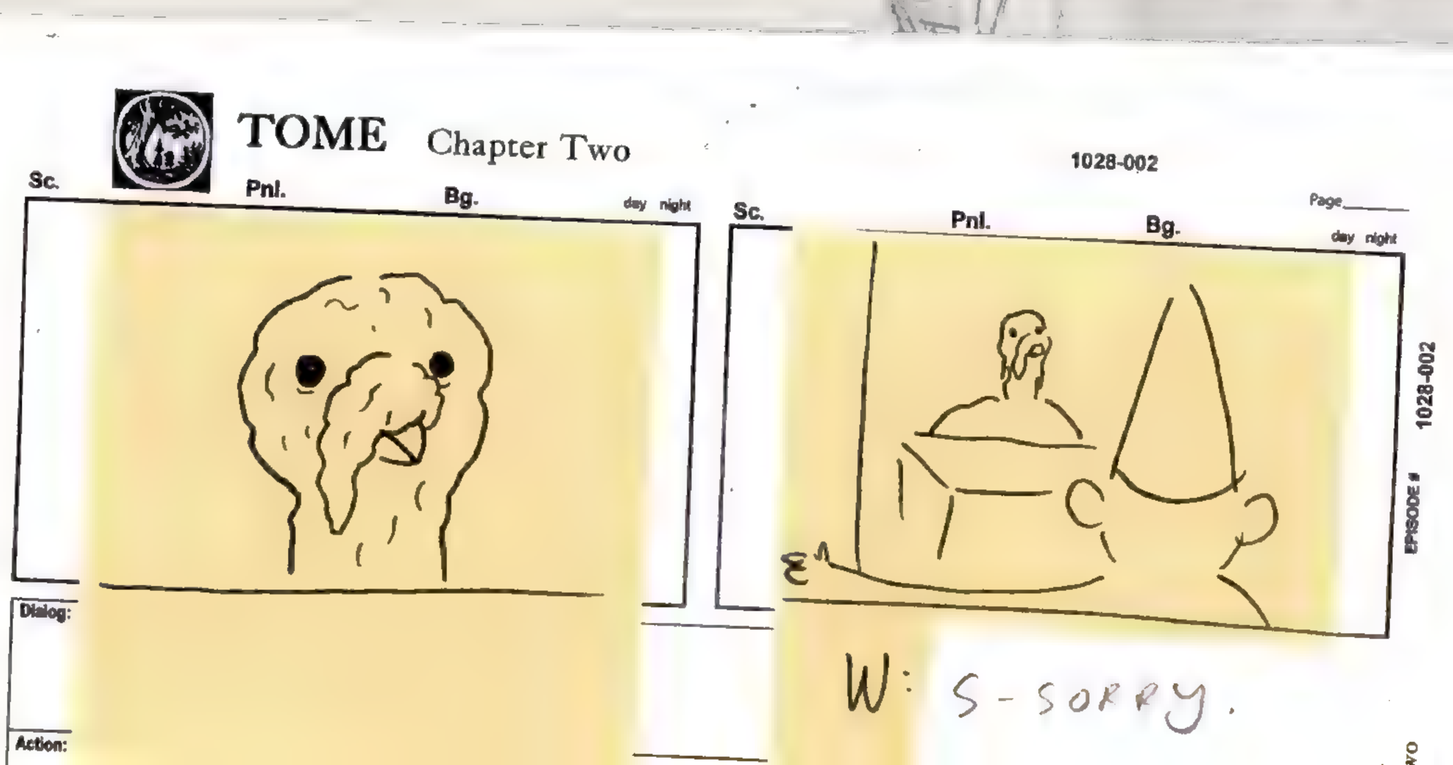


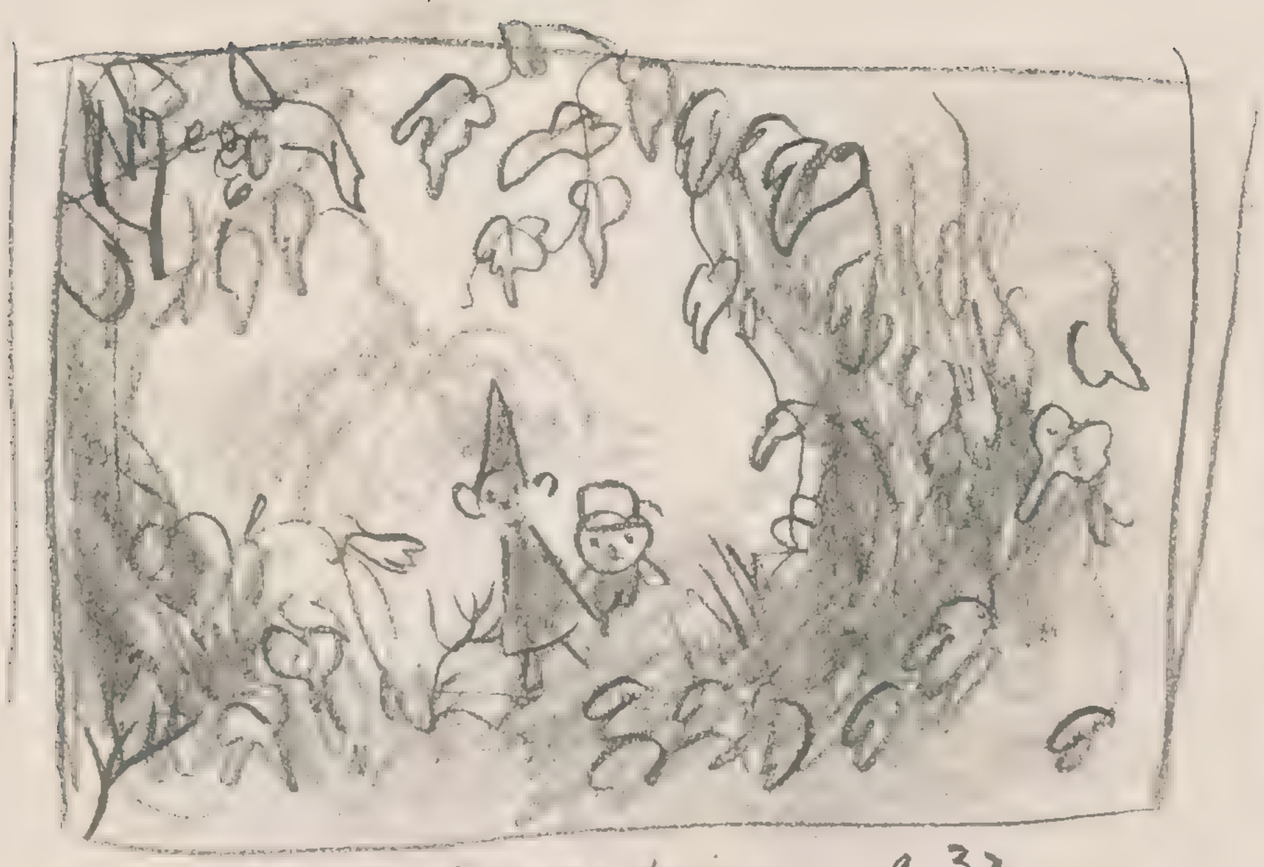
PM: Seo Kim designed the skeletons and cat in this episode. The skeletons were meant to resemble New England gravestones.

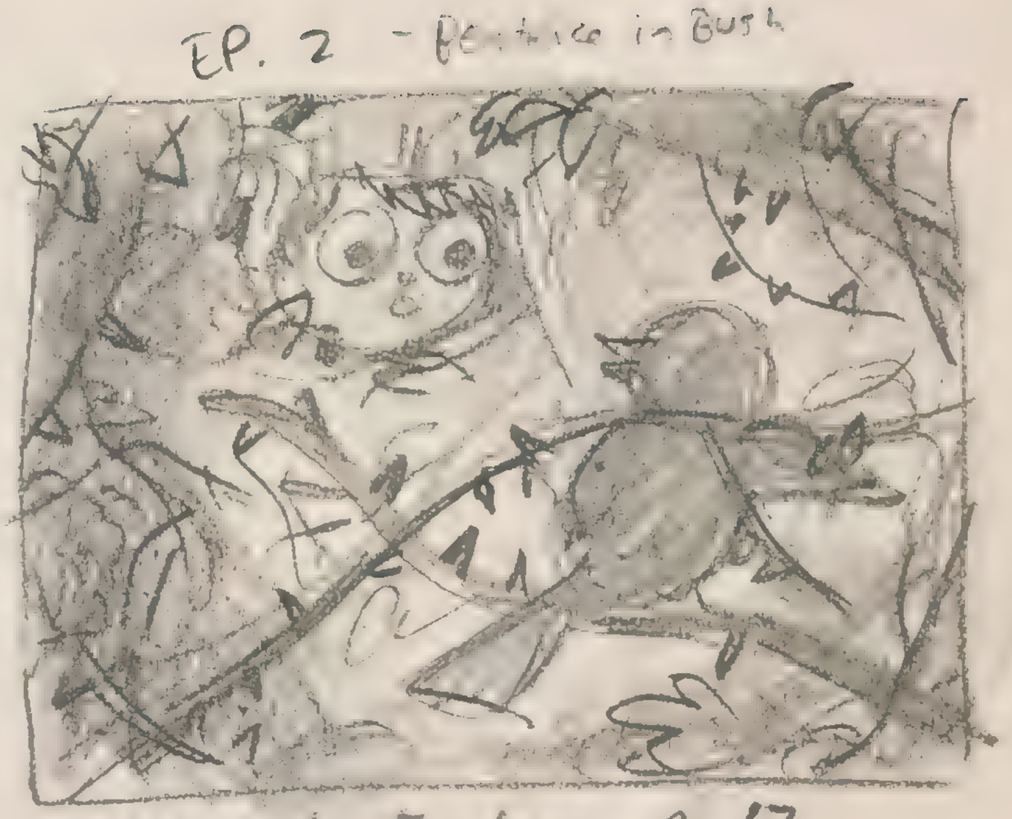


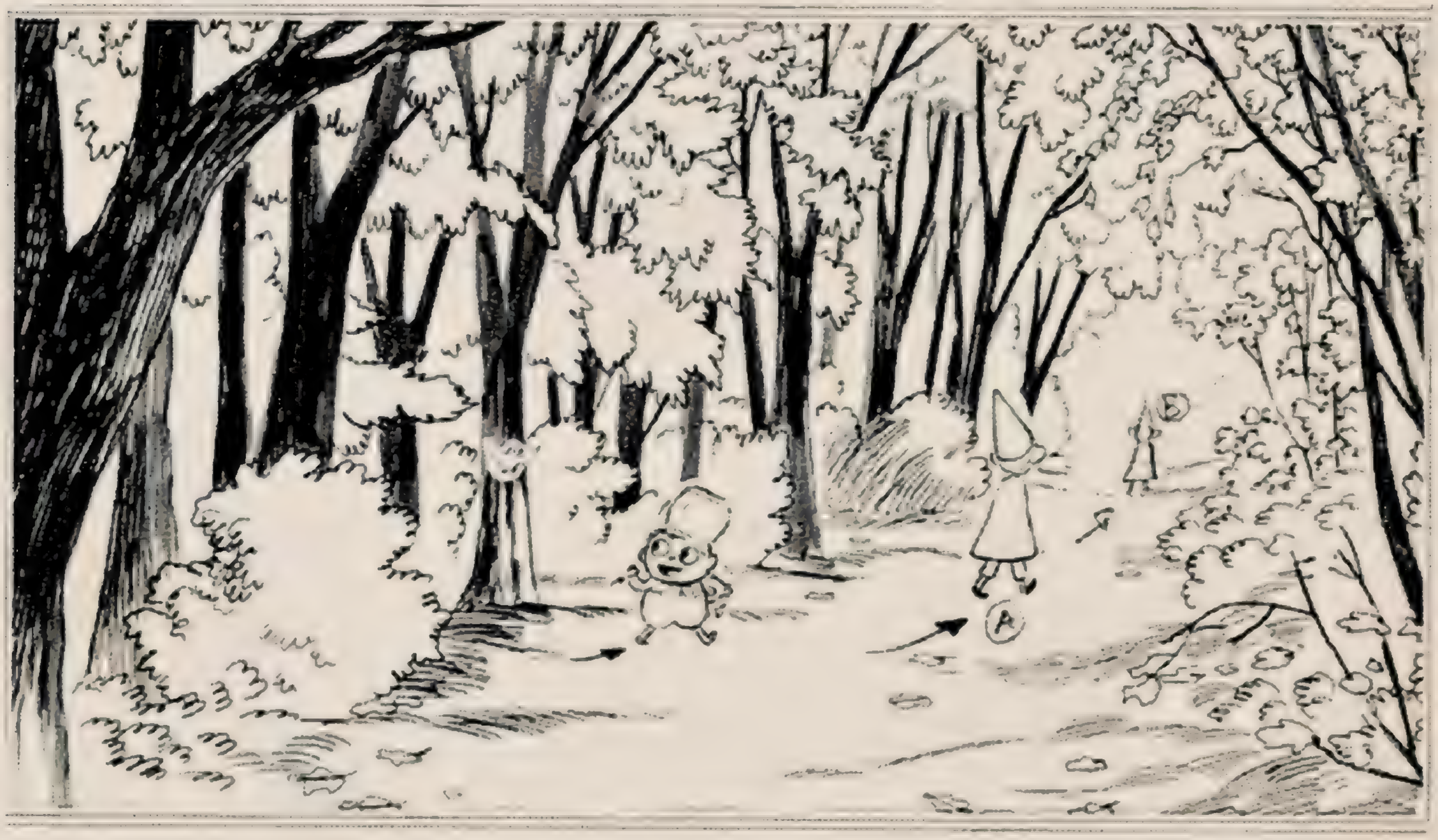


PM: Bert Youn storyboarded the sequence where Wirt awkwardly meets a turkey. I think the turkey is silently waiting to be prepared for Thanksgiving dinner.









PM: My sketches at the top of this page were based on Gustave Doré layouts. On the right you can see how they eventually translated into final artwork for the show. With Over the Garden Wall we were trying to make something that felt old, but not stale or played out. We didn't want it to feel like a watered-down version of classic animation, so we tried to get into the mindset of early filmmakers. What did they look to for inspiration? They were looking at classic literature, illustrations, and artwork (in addition to the film work of their contemporaries).

Sketches: Patrick McHale. Storyboard: Fran Krause. Backgrounds: Nick Cross

Once the bell
has rung, class
has begun

Background: German Orozco

Episode 3

"Schooltown Follies"

"The world really is as sweet as potatoes and molasses."

—MR. LANGTREE

Patrick McHale: When we were structuring the series, I had to convince the network that *Over the Garden Wall* wasn't all scary and spooky, so I wrote a premise with a schoolhouse and a bunch of animals. But I started to feel like having a school of animals broke the logic of the show; animals should act like animals, and people should act like people. Except for Beatrice, who is enchanted.

So in the next pass I changed the episode to a story about sailors who sail over fields of grass. (That story ended up as the first special issue of the BOOM! comics.) The network told me they much preferred the animal story. It so clearly conveyed a fun side of the show. I agreed that it was nice to have a light episode that focused more on Greg after the dark tone of "Hard Times at the Huskin' Bee." So we did "Schooltown Follies" as the third episode.

But when we first storyboarded the episode and pitched it to the network, they didn't like it very much! Mostly because it was too childish and cute and dreamlike—which was, ironically, exactly what I'd come to love about the story by that point.

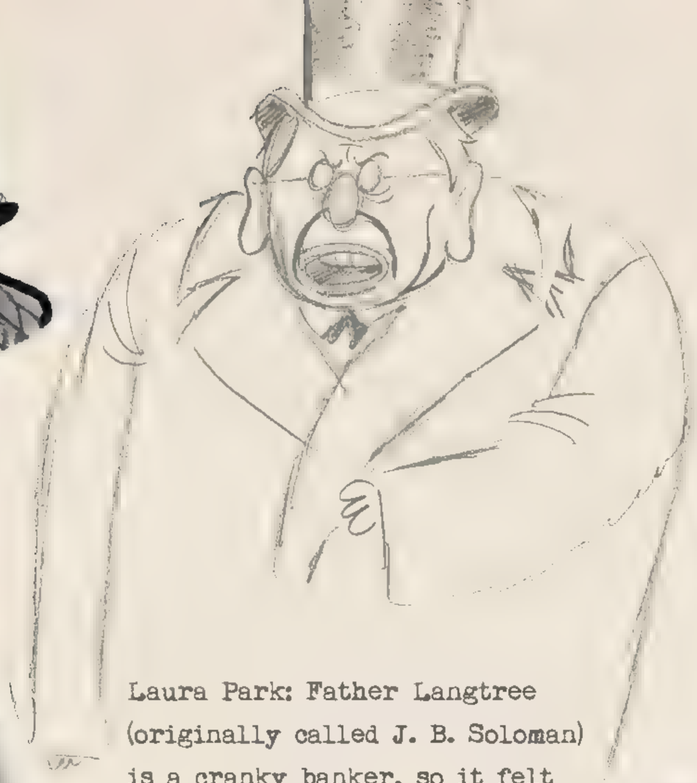
There was also a scene we'd added with Wirt lying in bed, staring at the silhouette of his hand against the ceiling as he poetically reflects on his existence being only a shadow. It was the first time that the network saw Wirt being poetic and overly dramatic (we hadn't finished episode 1 yet). So that part of the episode didn't go over so well either.

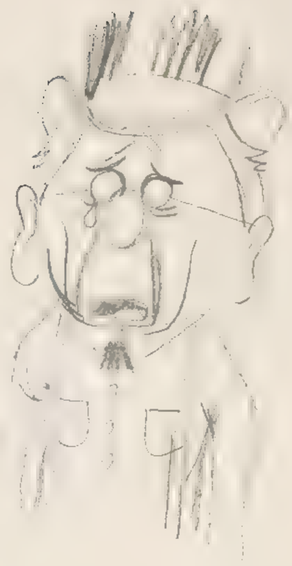
I think in the end we found the right balance for everyone. We removed the dreaminess and Wirt's dark reverie, but kept the innocence and cuteness intact. There was a lot of talk about *Our Gang*, *Anne of Green Gables*, and Shirley Temple while making this episode.

PM: Laura Park and Nick Cross did a lot of concept drawings for this episode. I loved Laura's bird and fish ideas, but I thought they raised too many questions about the logic of the world. Nick's drawings are hilarious, but I wanted the kids to feel more like realistic animals awkwardly wearing clothing. Nick showed me some old short films called Dogville Comedies, which was exactly the right idea. Eventually we had Seo do a pass on the school kids to help us figure out their final designs.

Laura Park: I have a ludicrously cute French bulldog, and the dog character is based on him. I try to put him in all my projects. The school kid with the fake nose, ears, and tail didn't make the final cut. He's a human kid pretending to be an animal.

Character Design: Nick Cross, Seo Kim, Laura Park. Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler
Color Styling: Ron Russell, Carol Wyatt. Art Direction: Nick Cross



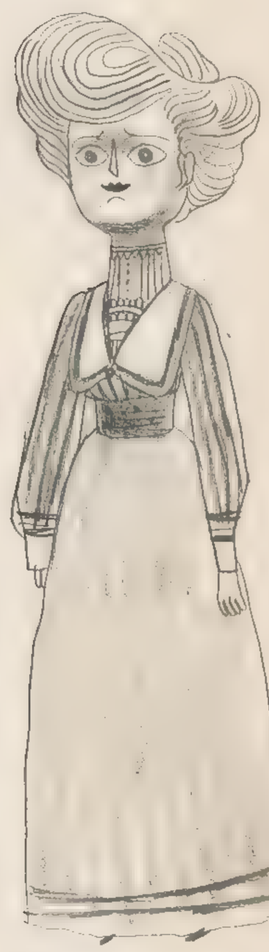


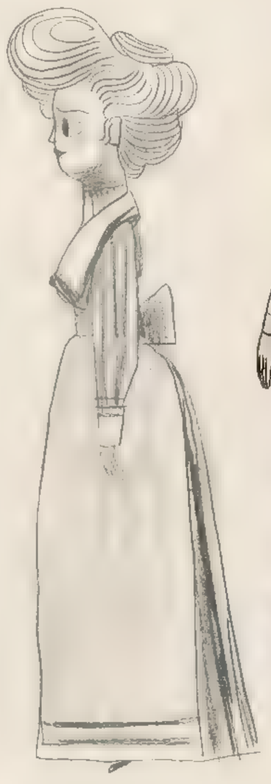
Laura Park: Father Langtree (originally called J. B. Soloman) is a cranky banker, so it felt ripe for some kind of visual gag. A fat cat who is all sizzle, no steak . . . or here, all fur coat and no body.

J.B. SOLOMAN

NC: The original concept for Father Langtree came from the Shirley Temple movie Curly Top. There are all these kids in an orphanage, and Shirley Temple shows up and makes everyone have fun. The guy who owns the orphanage says, "What is this?! Why are you having all this fun? You're not here to have fun!" He had to be this imposing-looking guy, but it turns out in the film that he was actually taking care of his mother, and he's going broke because he's paying for her medical bills. So he had to look sympathetic in the end, which is where the coat came from. For his face, we just made him look like J. D. Rockefeller.

Writer Amalia Levari developed the lovesick schoolteacher Miss Langtree from her own romantic misadventures. She adopted the name from the Judy Henske song "Lily Langtree," itself a reference to nineteenth-century actress and heartbreaker Lillie Langtry. Miss Langtree's design is based on nineteenth-century paintings of women reading books and letters by windows, and storyboard artist Laura Park gave her the slender neck and delicate features of a wooden doll.





♩ oH —

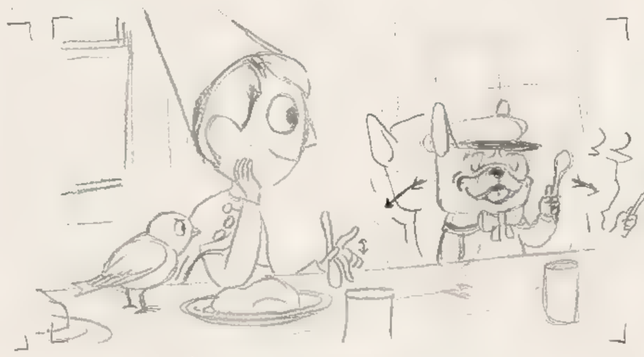
-out of Focus BG-

♪ "potatoes" ♫

"AND MOLASSES"

"If you want some"
(arm straightens on "IF")

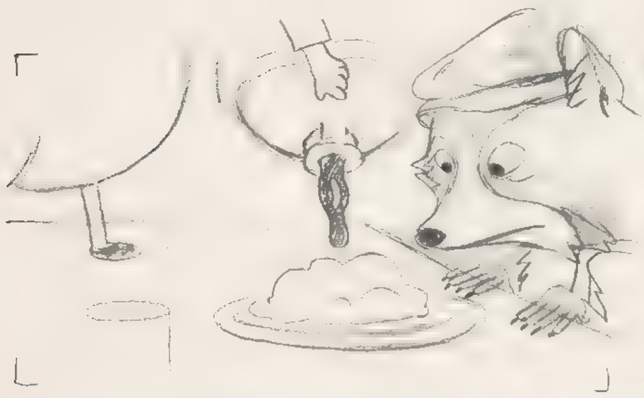
"Filled with cream and candy rocks!"



"oh potatoes and Molasses"

"oh just ask us."

"It's sweet and soft like Poppy's socks."



"Its sticky and sweet and full of noxious gasses
Slowly pouring — still hasn't touched potatoes

If your belly is grumbly

And your mouth is all mumbly

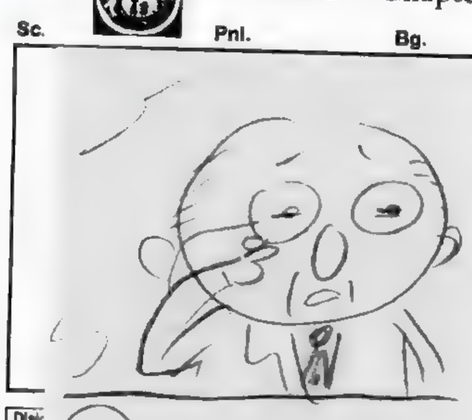
"Fill Your Tummy"

"OH, Potatoes and Molasses"

PM: Our storyboard artists for this episode, Jim Campbell and Laura Park, were both new to storyboarding for TV, but their natural sensibilities perfectly matched the show. Jim did the sequences with Greg and the kids (including the "Potatoes and Molasses" sequence above) while Laura took on Miss Langtree and her classroom.

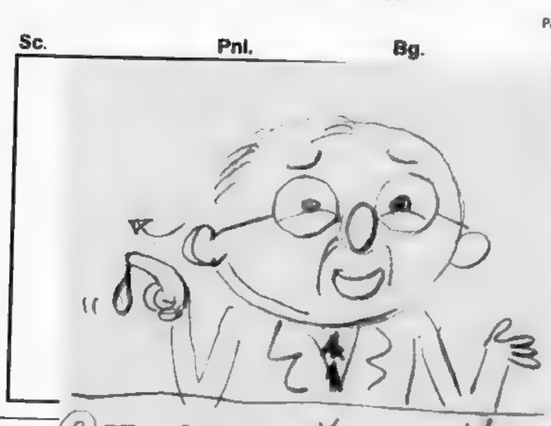
TOME Chapter Three 1028-003

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



(S) all our troubles are over!...

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



(S) I guess the world really is a wonderful place.

EPISODE # 1028-003

NC: The way characters used to wipe and hold tears on their fingers traumatized me as a kid. To carry on the cycle of abuse, I forced Pat to let me put it in Over the Garden Wall.

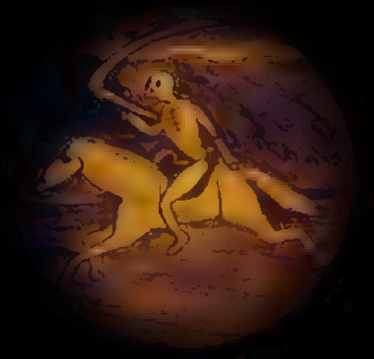
PM: We gave the gorilla costume crazy, shaggy hair and a blood-colored mouth to look like the weird, scary ape costumes in old stage shows and movies, especially early adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe's The Murders in the Rue Morgue. Apes were basically just seen as violent monsters back then. The episode was also heavily inspired by the chase sequences from the 1930 Our Gang comedy Bear Shooters.

Character Design: Nick Cross. Storyboards: Jim Campbell, Bert Youn
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler. Color Styling: Ron Russell, Carol Wyatt
Art Direction: Nick Cross

NC: Pat really wanted the world to look different in each episode. His one main note was that he wanted more green in this one. Pottsfield had been fall--there were a lot of oranges, browns, reds, and yellows. This one needed a lot of green, and a bright red schoolhouse. That was the idea: this forest looks different from the previous one, and they come into a clearing with this strange schoolhouse. All of a sudden, everything's really cute and friendly.

Backgrounds: Nick Cross

Background: Nick Cross



Episode 4

"Songs of the Dark Lantern"

"I'm the Highway Man. I make ends meet, just like any man. I work with my hands. If you cross my path, I'll knock you out, drag you off the road. Steal your shoes from off your feet. I'm the Highway Man, and I make ends meet."

—THE HIGHWAY MAN

Patrick McHale: Back in the day, people didn't have the same sense of individual identity that we do now. You were more defined by your circumstances than by something inside of you. So I thought it would be interesting to look at people who define themselves by their roles in society, and contrast that with a more modern boy like Wirt. He should be more in tune with his own identity, but he's actually more confused than anybody.

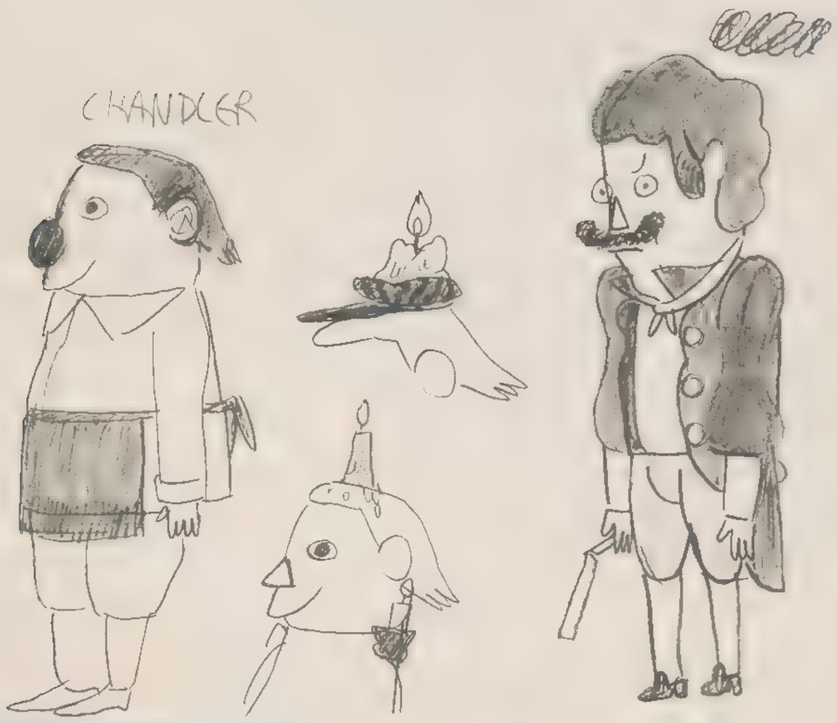
So they start defining him . . . just like people do to each other in high school: "You're the weird kid," or "You're the jock." Wirt doesn't feel like he fits any labels, and he pretends that he's proud of not fitting into a mold, but inside he's struggling to find his identity.

At first they call him "the young lover." And he is that, in some ways, but that's an embarrassing thing for someone his age to admit. Especially when they throw you on a stage and start chanting, "Sing, lover, sing!" at you. How embarrassing. A whole crowd looking at you and judging you, and saying who they think you are. That's basically what your teenage years can feel like.

When we were recording that episode, we purposely hadn't written a melody for Wirt to sing, and we forced Elijah Wood (who did Wirt's voice) to make it up. We wrote lyrics, but no melody. It was a pretty hilarious recording session, with Collin Dean (the voice of Greg) and me shouting, "Sing, lover, sing!" at Elijah over and over again, trying to make him feel as uncomfortable as possible. Obviously Elijah is a very experienced actor, so I don't know if he really felt uncomfortable with all our jeering, but we tried to make the atmosphere as oppressive and awkward for him as possible.

Amalia Levari: We talked a lot about Wirt's particular relationship with Greg. The fact that they're half brothers was a big talking point. The scene where Wirt discovers that he's a pilgrim was a big focus in terms of trying to think about what his particular struggle is. It's funny to think about it, because he feels like a person to me now. But at the time, his identity wasn't crystallized yet, and we were figuring out how we could depict his character in a way that would fit into a relatively short-form narrative.

PM: Pen Ward's storyboards for this episode were some of the funniest parts of the series, but I wanted to make sure the tavern didn't end up feeling too modern. I did this pass of character designs to try to incorporate details from various old illustrations, attempting to make them look more old fashioned. Although I do like some of these redesigns individually, as a group they aren't cohesive. They look like they're all from different time periods and different places in the world. So we didn't use any of these.



PM: The original idea for the tavern was less comedic; it was more dark and ominous. The idea of having a character with a Betty Boop voice was to lighten things up, and Nick thought it'd be fun to actually make her look a bit like Betty Boop too.

Character Sketches: Jim Campbell, Nick Cross, Graham Falk, Patrick McHale, Pen Ward
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler
Color Styling: Camille Stancin
Art Direction: Nick Cross

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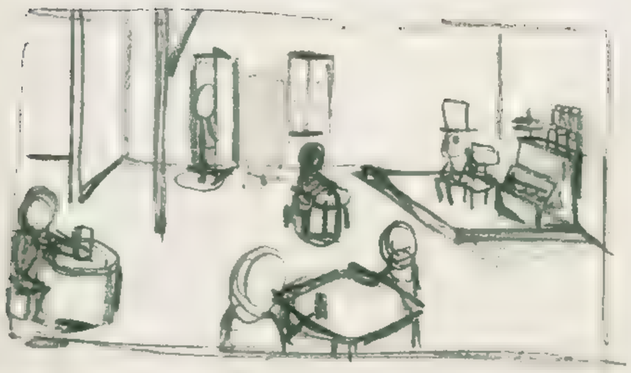
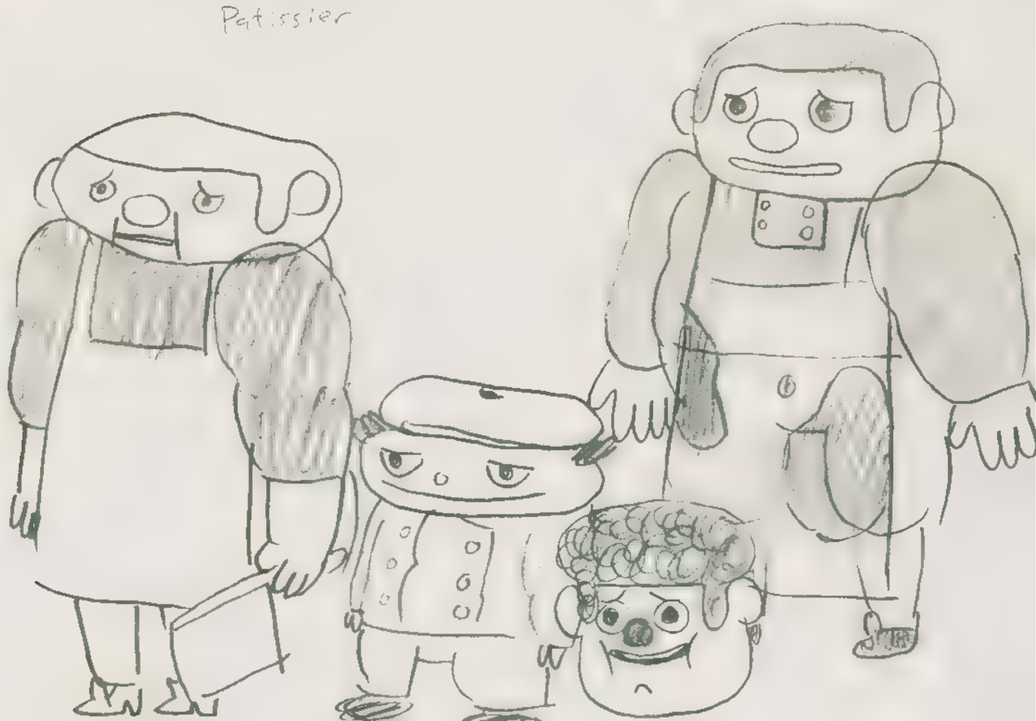
PM: I loved Frank Fairfield's voice and wanted to make the Toy Maker character feel really special, but we never quite figured it out. I wasn't even sure if he should be a toy maker, or a cabinetmaker, or what. Nick wanted him to look like Santa Claus, which, in hindsight, may have been the best idea.





Storyboards: Steve MacLeod. Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian. Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler
Color Styling: Camille Stancin. Art Direction: Nick Cross

NC: The tree in this episode has a lot of faces on it. I thought at first it could have been Civil War soldiers that had fallen asleep by the tree. But it got wrapped into this idea that all the people in the tavern are actually in this tree—that's where they all died. If you watch, they don't actually leave the tavern. It's called the Dark Lantern, and that's what this tavern is: the lantern that their souls are trapped in.

The Unknown is Wirt's particular vision of what the next world may be, informed by his own interests. When you go back to the real world there are all these hints about what's in the Unknown. You see Endicott's grave. Maybe when he was there he saw that and imagined what that was. The Unknown is informed by his perspective. If you or I had gone to this world, it would look completely different.

Amalia Levari: The Unknown is a liminal space. And there are a lot of different terms for that, which are associated with death. To me, it describes a state that people are in, but they do exist. Death implies a lack of existence.

TOME Chapter Four 1028-004

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night

Dialog:

Action:

Timing:

EPISODE # 1028-004 PRODUCTION Chapter Four

TOME Chapter Four 1028-004

Sc. 317 Pnl. Bg. day night

Dialog:

Action: Horse roars up from the darkness towards woodsman.

Timing: 510

TOME Chapter Four 1028-004

Sc. 317 Pnl. Bg. day night

Dialog:

Action: Horse roars up from the darkness towards woodsman.

Timing: 517

TOME Chapter Four 1028-004

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night

Dialog:

Action:

Timing:

EPISODE # 1028-004 PRODUCTION Chapter Four

TOME Chapter Four 1028-004

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night

Dialog:

Action: Lantern falls, hits floor, sparks fly out, land on oil, it catches fire.

Timing: 536

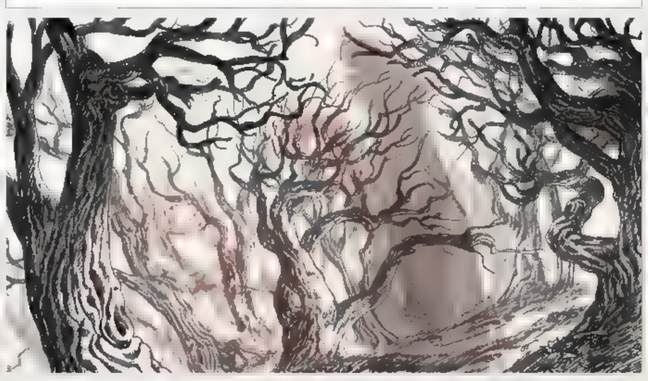
TOME Chapter Four 1028-004

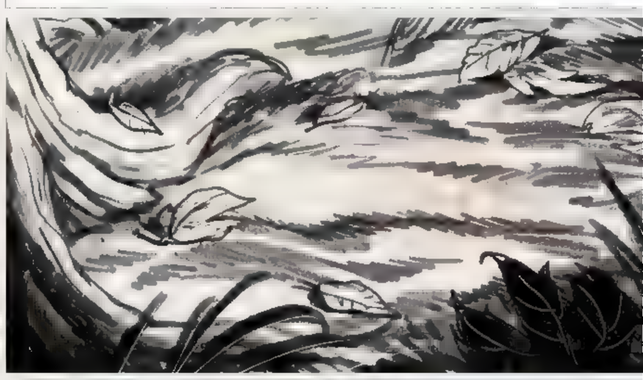
Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night

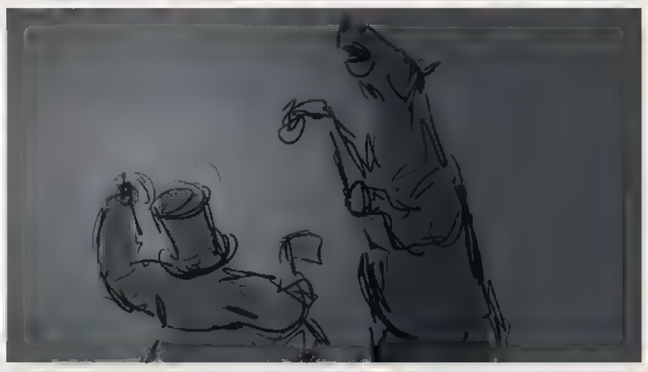
Dialog:

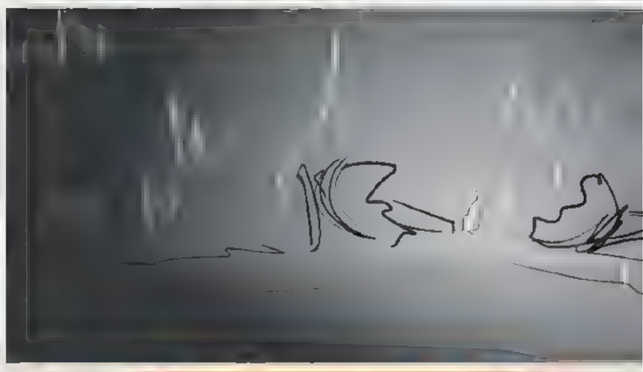
Action: Lantern falls, hits floor, sparks fly out, land on oil, it catches fire.

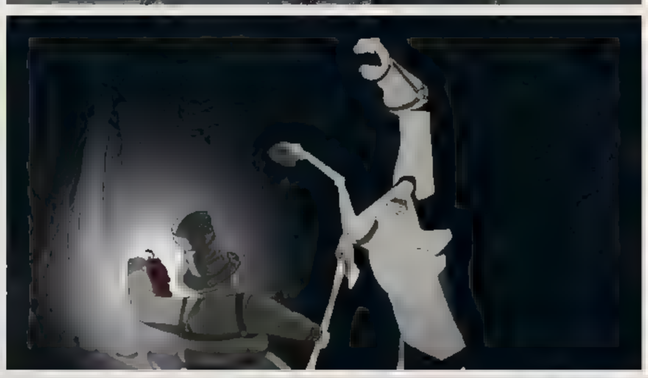
Timing: 537

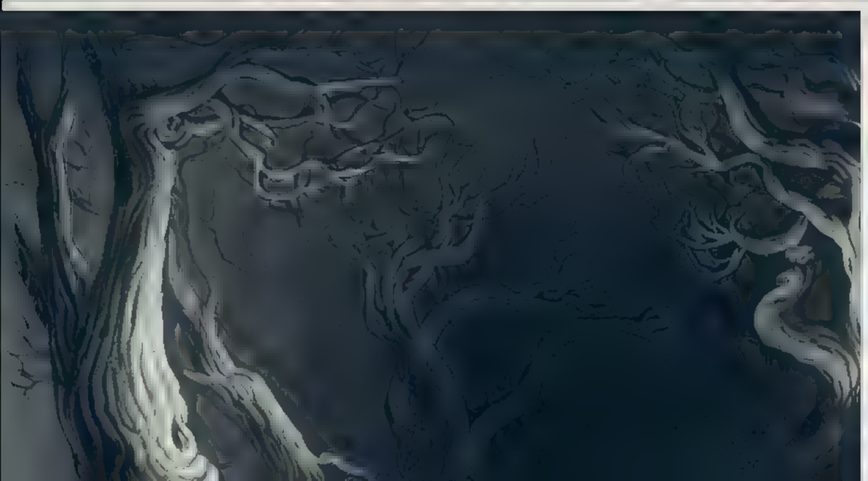












Background Layout: Nick Cross, Jim Smith
Background Painting: Nick Cross, Levon Jihanian, German Orozco

PM: One of my favorite paintings in the series was this close-up of a wooden post outside Fred the Horse's little area. It's what Beatrice is sitting on when she's waiting for Wirt and Greg outside the tavern. It's one of the least important backgrounds in the whole series, but it's just such a beautiful little painting. Levon Jihanian is amazing.

Background: Nick Cross, [illegible], Tsirgi

Episode 5

"Mad Love"

"The more money I make, the bigger my mansion gets, the more lost I feel. This house is so big, I don't even know where, or who, I am!"

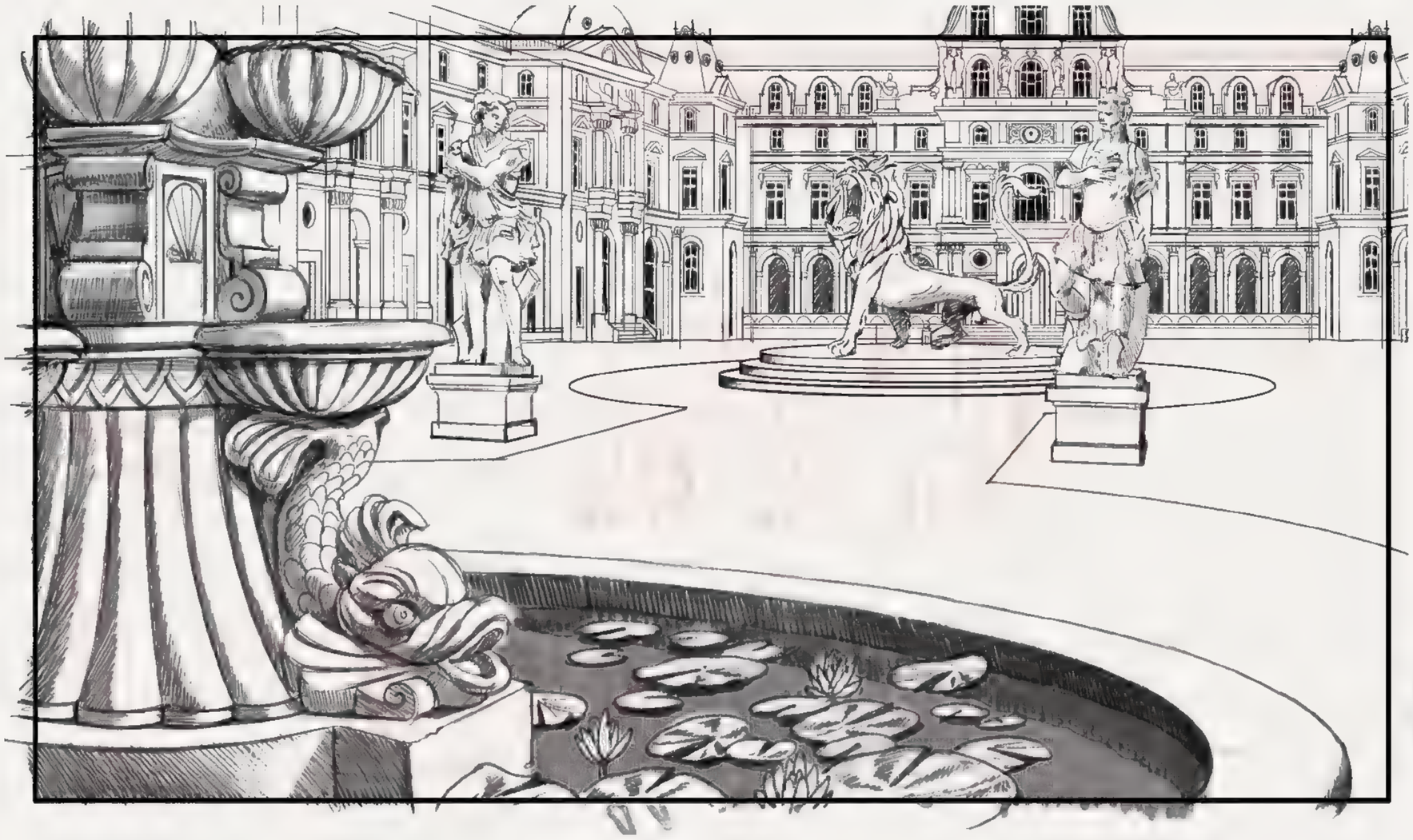
—QUINCY ENDICOTT

Patrick McHale: The inspiration for this story came from a dream I had, where I was looking at houses to buy. I was inside a small house, looking at the fireplace, and there was a staircase that went up through the chimney. On the left side, there were some bricks missing and you could walk up. While the real-estate agent was talking to somebody else, I went up the steps. They wound their way up, up, up, until finally opening into a big, beautiful library. The rest of the house had been very plain, but this secret room was just gorgeous. There was a giant globe in the middle of the room, and all these books, and candles, and an ornate old rug. "This room is so ... valuable," I thought. "If I buy this house and I get this room, I'll immediately make my money back."

Then I noticed the room had a large set of doors on the opposite side, which opened into another hallway. I thought, "This house is so big! Did the previous resident even know about all this? How long has it been since someone set foot here?" I walked down the hall, seeing room after beautiful room. They looked like the rooms Wirt and Beatrice find when they come out of the fireplace. But then I heard a sound from one of the rooms. Someone was in this part of the house with me. And it slowly began to dawn on me that I wasn't in the same house. I had accidentally broken into a stranger's house through a secret passage. I was trespassing in some rich person's mansion! I tried to leave, and then I woke up.

PM: Nick's theory for Endicott's style was to mix a little bit of George Washington with a little bit of King George III, representing both America and Britain in one design.

PM: The huge collar on some of Endicott's early designs was inspired by an illustration by Charles Altamont Doyle, the father of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.



PM: If this were a more traditional fairy tale and set in Europe, Endicott probably would have been a medieval king living in a big, magnificent castle. But in America we have millionaires instead of kings.

Patrick McHale: This episode was written like an old-time radio psychodrama, where Endicott is a normal rich guy who slowly devolves into madness. It was originally more dramatic than funny, but John Cleese made it really funny by giving Endicott all these weird vocal tics. When we initially got on the phone to start our recording session, I was nervous about directing John Cleese, and basically the first thing he asked me was if my intent with this episode was to insult and caricature British people like himself, as revenge for the old colonial days in America. His dry humor was completely lost on me in that nervous moment and I immediately responded, "No, no! Not at all! I wouldn't do that!" and started babbling incoherently about how much I like tea and British things . . . until I realized he was really just trying to deduce how he should approach Endicott's voice and personality.

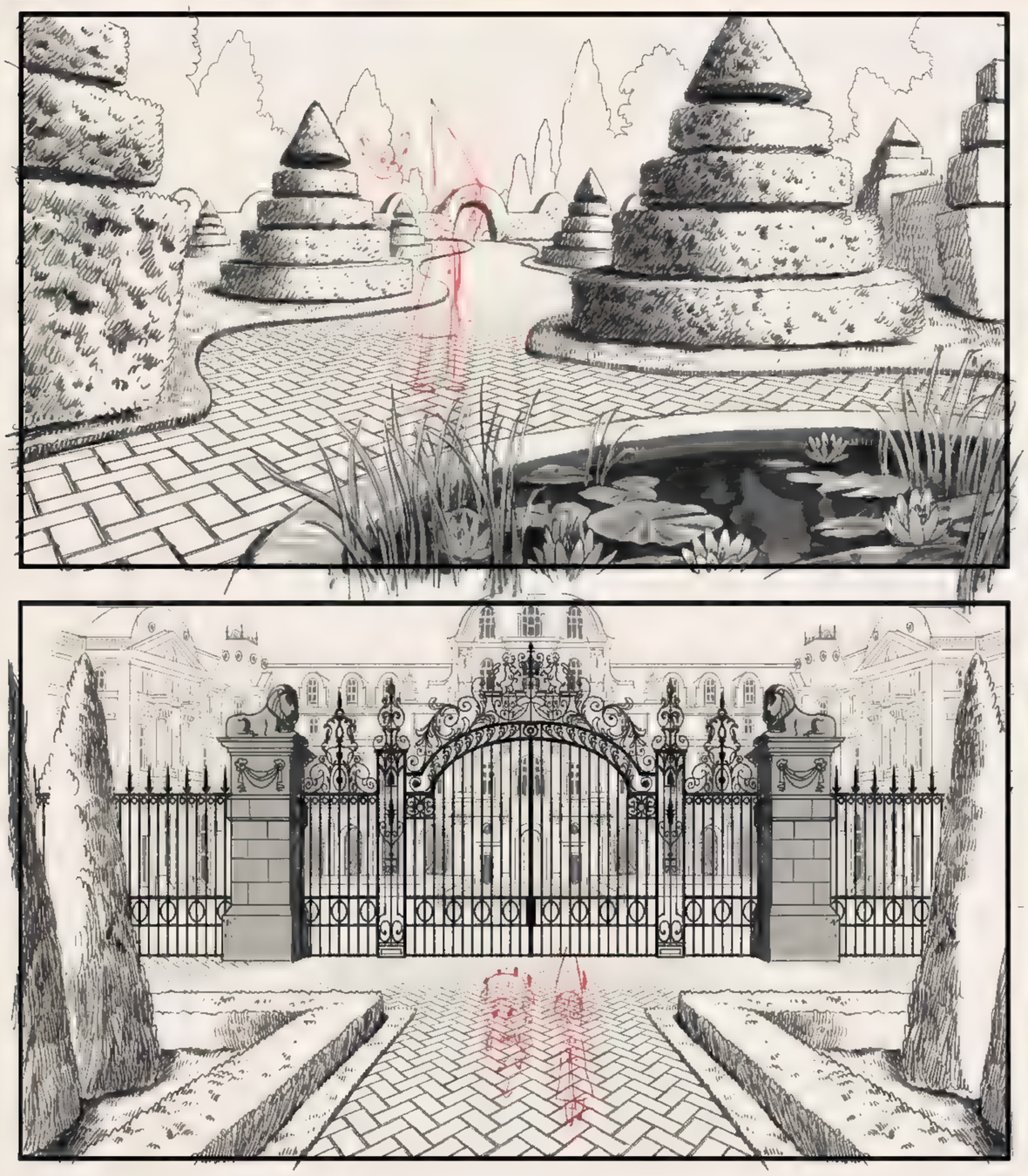
Nick Cross: The time period informed the design. We made Quincy Endicott look like George Washington. The modern American accent came about over a long time period, and we don't have any recordings of colonial accents. So I imagine George Washington had a British accent, more or less. Margueritte is more French. We based her on Marie Antoinette. The two mansions had to look significantly different. We made Endicott's part of the mansion look like Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's house—very Georgian. We made Margueritte's part more ornate, based on Versailles.

We knew it was going to be a challenge to draw—especially the Margueritte part. But we had an ace in the hole with Chris Tsirgiotis. We didn't tell him to go as crazy as he did. I think that he enjoyed doing it, even though he thought it was a pain. We basically said, "Here's a box—make it really elaborate." He just went to town on it.

Chris Tsirgiotis: This was the most intensive episode of the bunch—all of that baroque architecture! Toward the end, I was relying on photo reference to get it done. As long as you put in the right search keywords, you'll get what you need. The fountain is from the Huntington Library, which is close to my house.

Character Design: Nick Cross. Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler. Color Styling: Carol Wyatt
Art Direction: Nick Cross

Prop Design: Nick Cross. Storyboards: Natasha Allegri
Background Layout: Nick Cross, Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Nick Cross, Levon Jihanian, German Orozco

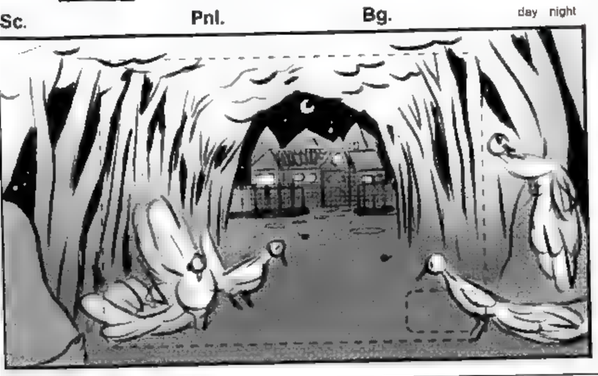


TOME Chapter Five

1028-005

Page

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



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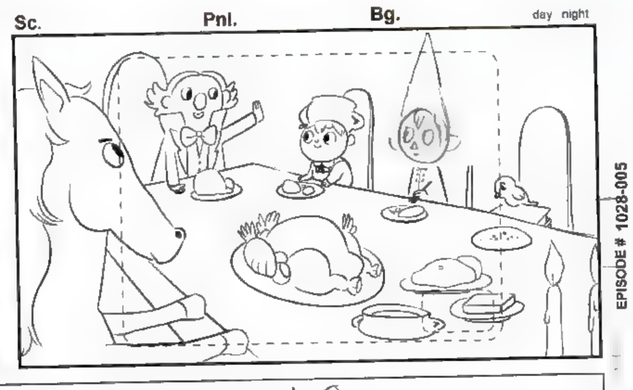

EPISODE # 1028-005

Dialog: Endicott (o/s) Yeo, tea...

(E) tea's my trade! Quincey Endicott's health tea!

PRODUCTION Chapter Five

TOME Chapter Five

1028-005

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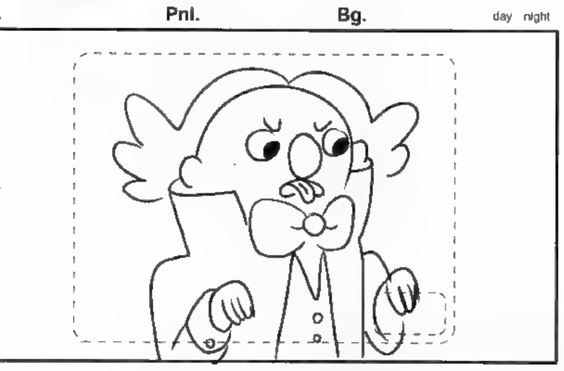

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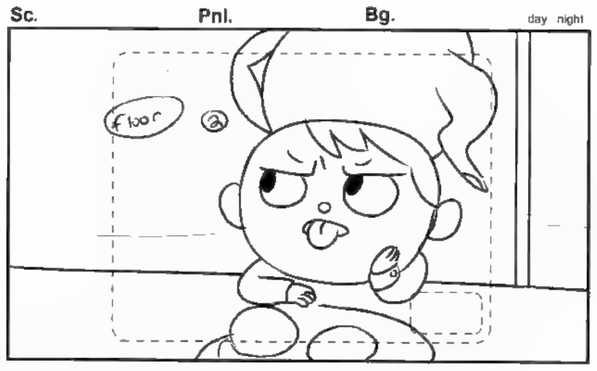

EPISODE # 1028-005

Dialog: (E) Eugh, never touch the stuff myself

(G) Yuck! Me either.

Action:

Timing:

5

6

PRODUCTION Chapter Five

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TOME Chapter Five

1028-005

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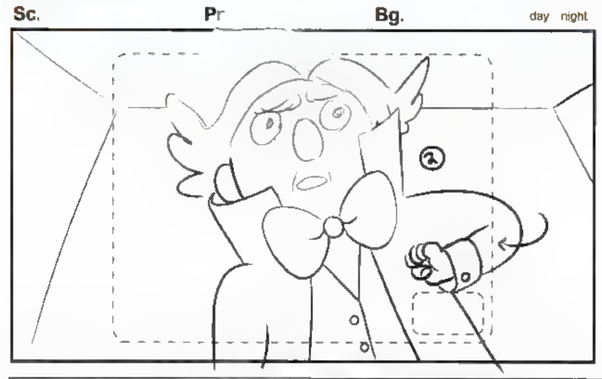

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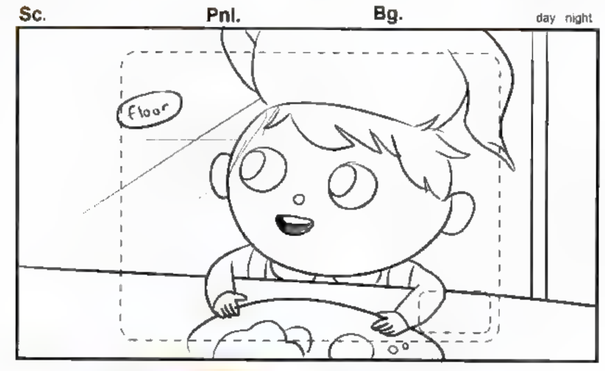
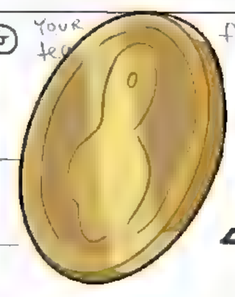


EPISODE # 1028-005

Dialog: (E) ① It'd be the sweet tea ② if I ③ there was tea!

(G) Your tea was fine!



4

Action:

Timing:

3

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TOME Chapter Five

1028-005

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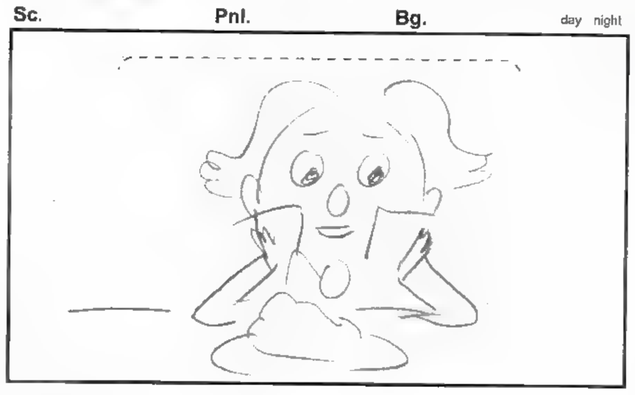

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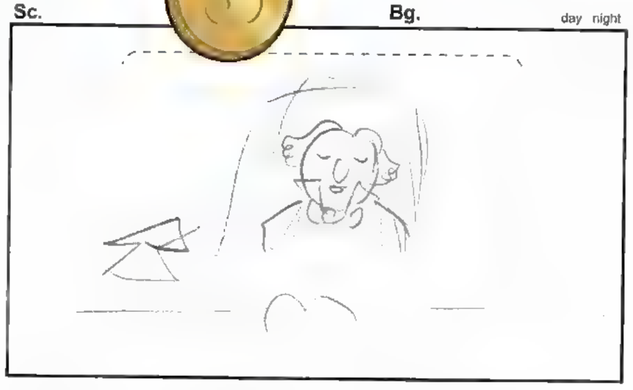


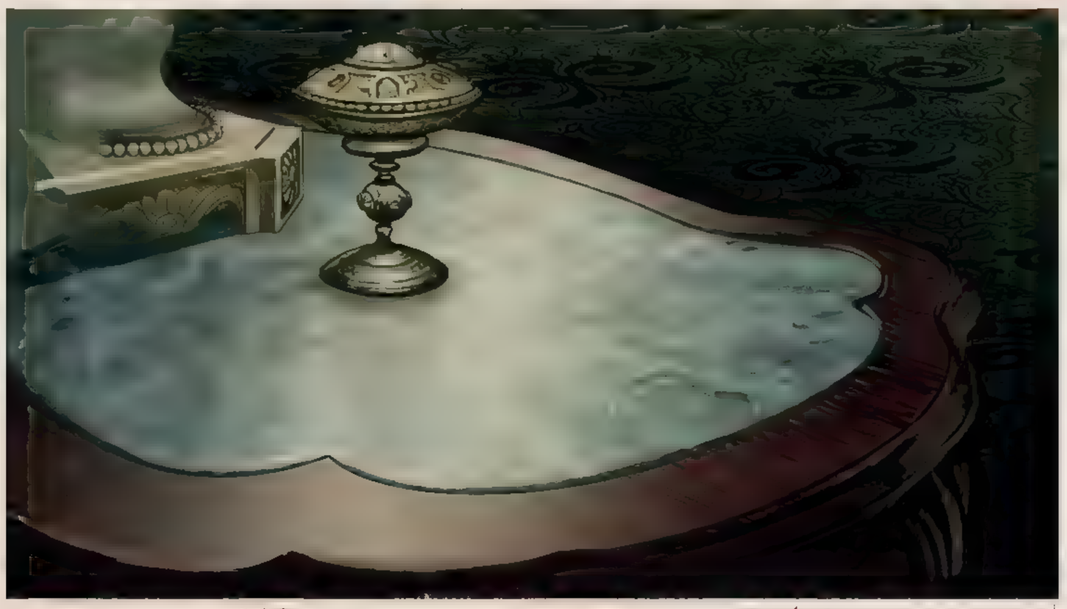
EPISODE # 1028-005

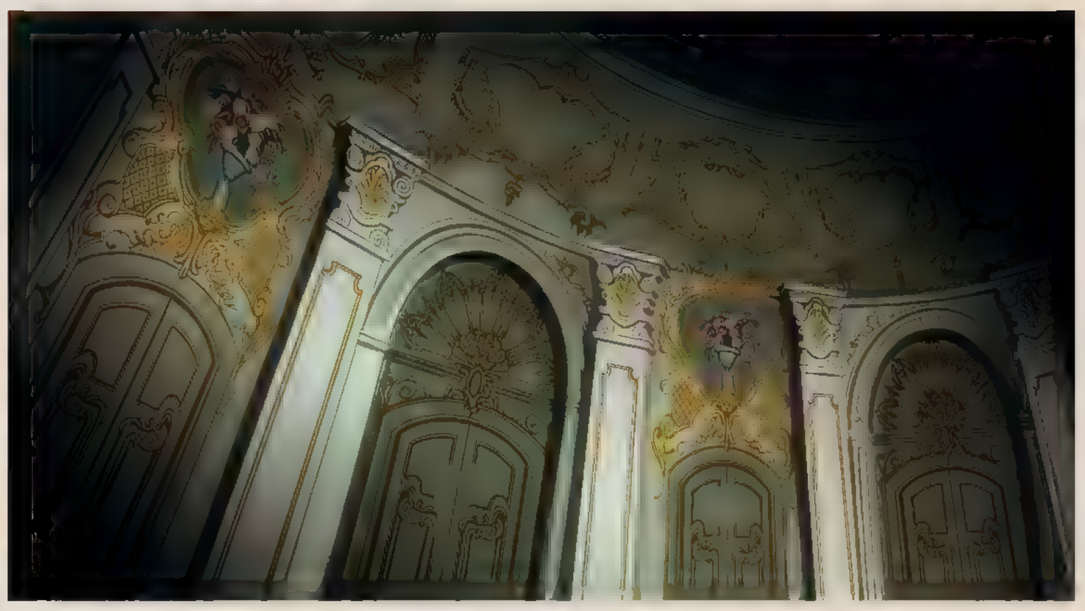
Dialc (E) haha, Yes.

(E) yes its all fo. the money.

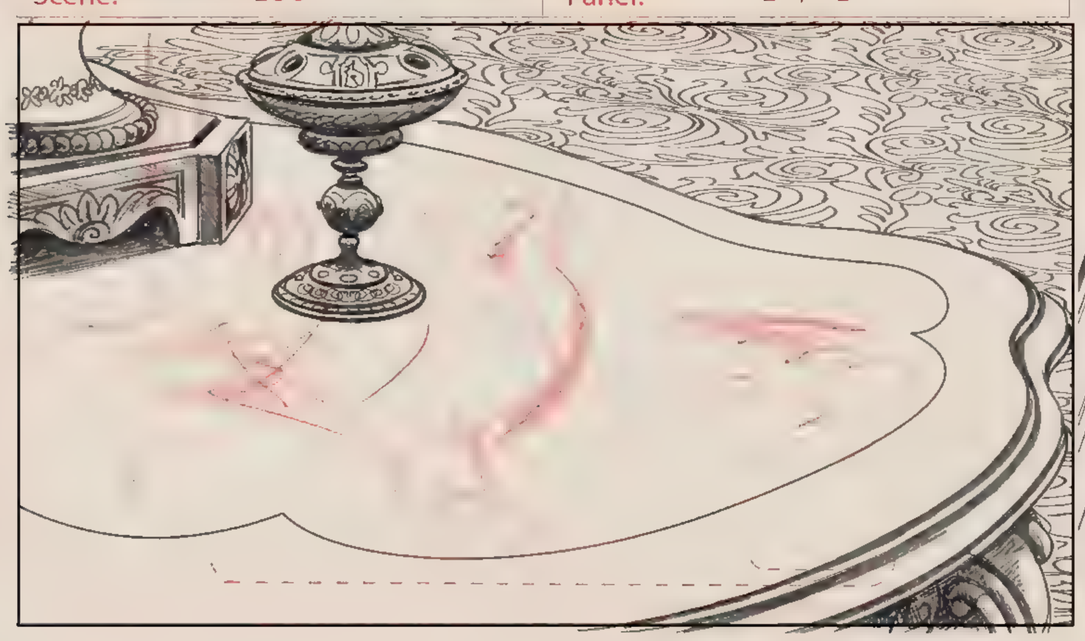
Chapter Five

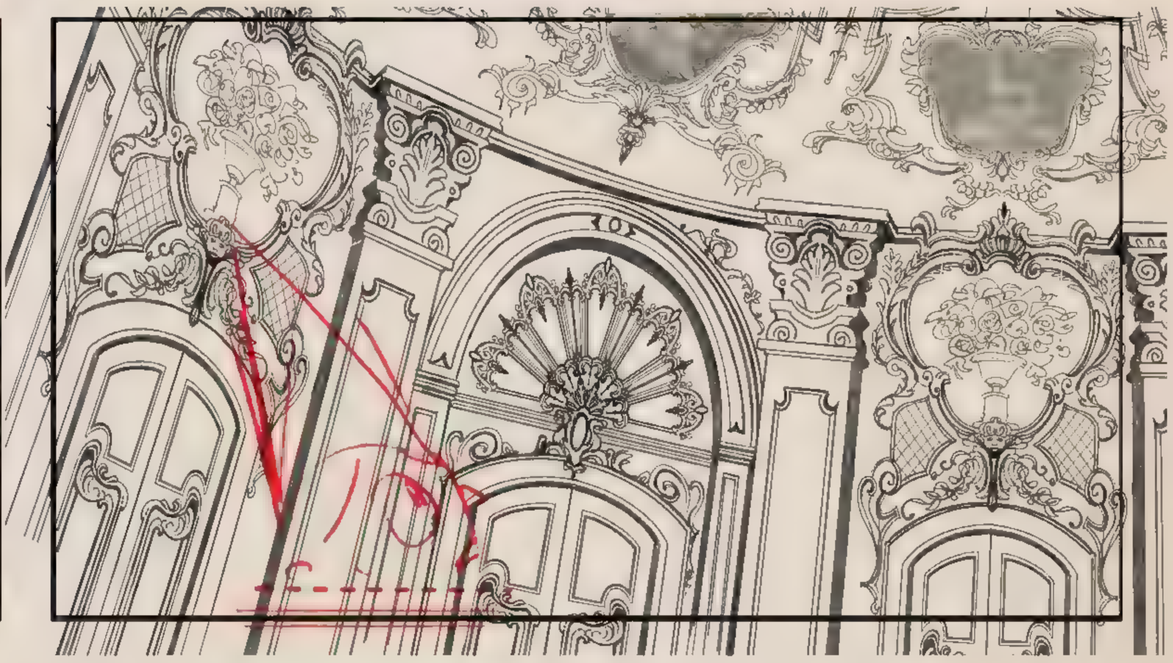
Character Design: Nick Cross, Storyboards, Zac Gorman, Pen Ward
Background Layout: Nick Cross, Jim Smith, Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Levon Ihanian, German Orozco
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler *Color Styling:* Carol Wyatt
Art Direction: Nick Cross

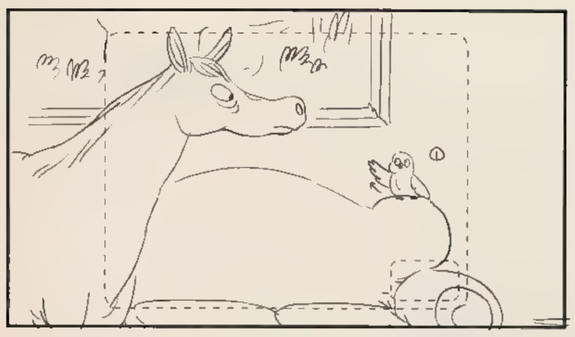


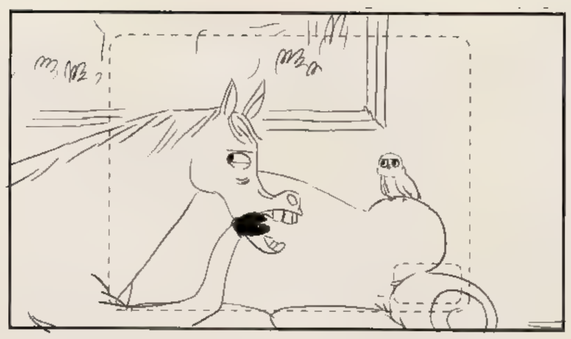


Scene: 138 | Panel: 1 / 1



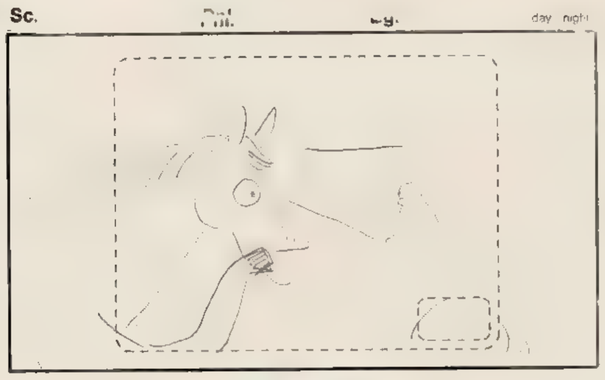


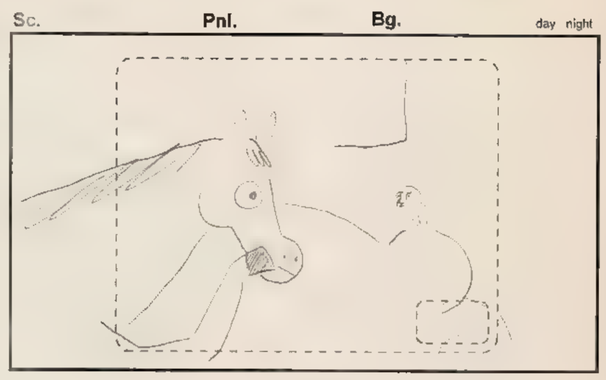


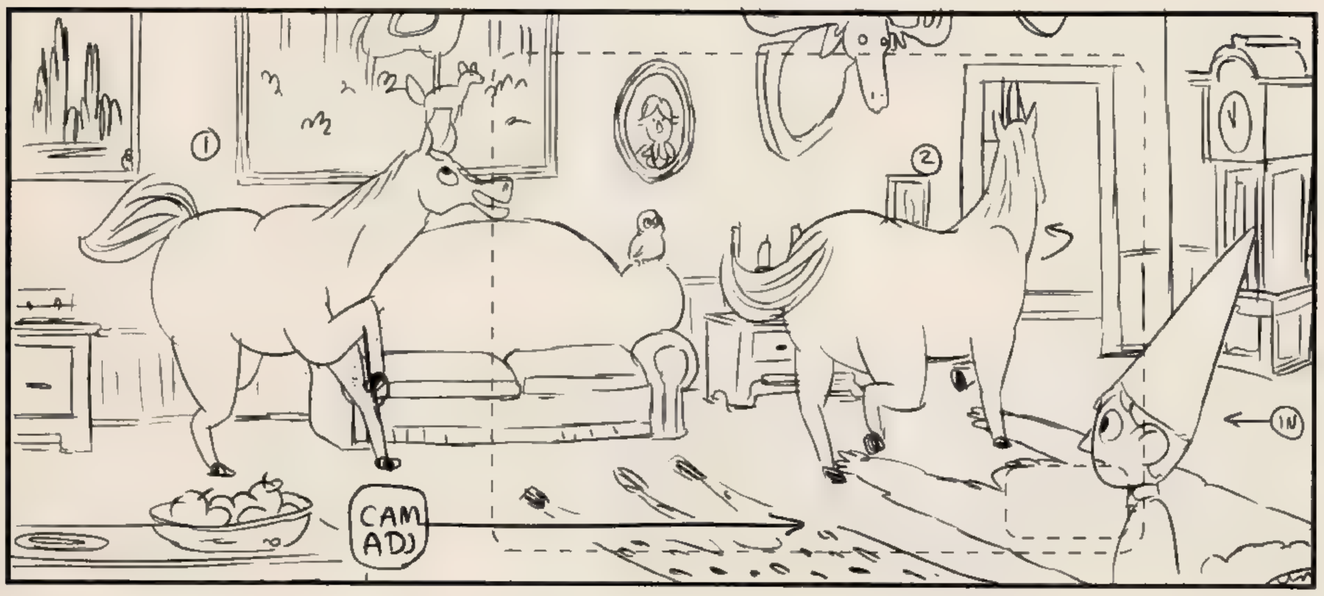


F: (trying to whisper but yelling) While I'm at it, I'll steal other stuff too!

B: Fred! Go with them. ② Buy us some time to look for money!







F: ① Don't worry! You can ② count on me!

- Camera follows Fred as he crosses and exits
- Wirt comes just into frame as Fred exits

Background Layout: Nick Cross, Jim Smith, Chi[illegible]
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian, German Oroz[illegible]

Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Clarke Snyder

Episode 6

"Lullaby in Frogland"

"At night, when the lake is a mirror, and the moon rides the waves to the shore
A single soul sets his voice singing, content to be slightly forlorn.
A song rises over the lilies, sweeps high to clear over the reeds and
over the bulrushes swaying to pluck at a pair of heartstrings."

—GEORGE WASHINGTON, THE FROG

Patrick McHale: One of the inspirations for this episode was a 1922 stop-motion silent film by Wladyslaw Starewicz called *Frogland*. We were also heavily inspired by old postcards, magazine illustrations, and board games. Frogs are a symbol of love, which I think is lovely and appropriate. They're funny, but also dignified, when they're standing up walking around. I remember Bert Youn worked really hard to make sure our frogs didn't lose that elegant look during the storyboard phase.

Nick Cross: Two separate episodes got crammed together into this one. This episode was the hardest to make work. It was the linchpin of the entire series, where it changes tone. We spend all this time on a frog ferry, and then all of a sudden, they're in Adelaide's house. It really feels like two separate stories. It took a lot of late nights and all-nighters to make it work.

Patrick McHale: We introduced Adelaide in the beginning of the series as a sort of MacGuffin and then, at some point, as we were getting close to episode 6, we paused and said, "Wait . . . what's Adelaide all about?" There were so many plot things to juggle, I hadn't thought much about Adelaide's actual design or personality.

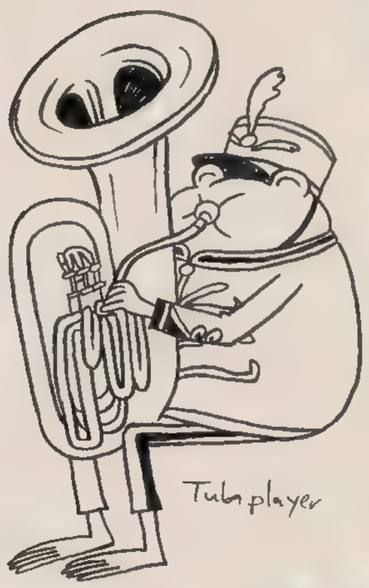
We thought, maybe she's spidery. Maybe she has all these arms, and she's always knitting, and her whole house is covered in yarn webs that she uses to trap people. The final cartoon has remnants of that, but having all those arms seemed too overwhelming and complicated in a sequence that was already very packed with information.

Nick Cross: She changed from the outline to the board to the finished episode. Originally she was called "Adelaide of the Orchard" and lived in an apple orchard. I based her on Emily Dickinson. We knew that she was a hermit. She never left her house. Pat decided that she should be Auntie Whispers's sister, and she started looking more like Baba Yaga.

Oboe player

Flute player

Laura Park: I always want to draw frogs. And frogs in 1800s riverboat jazz band outfits? YES PLEASE. It was pretty much my dream gig. That's a pretty specific dream, but the heart wants what it wants.



Tuba player

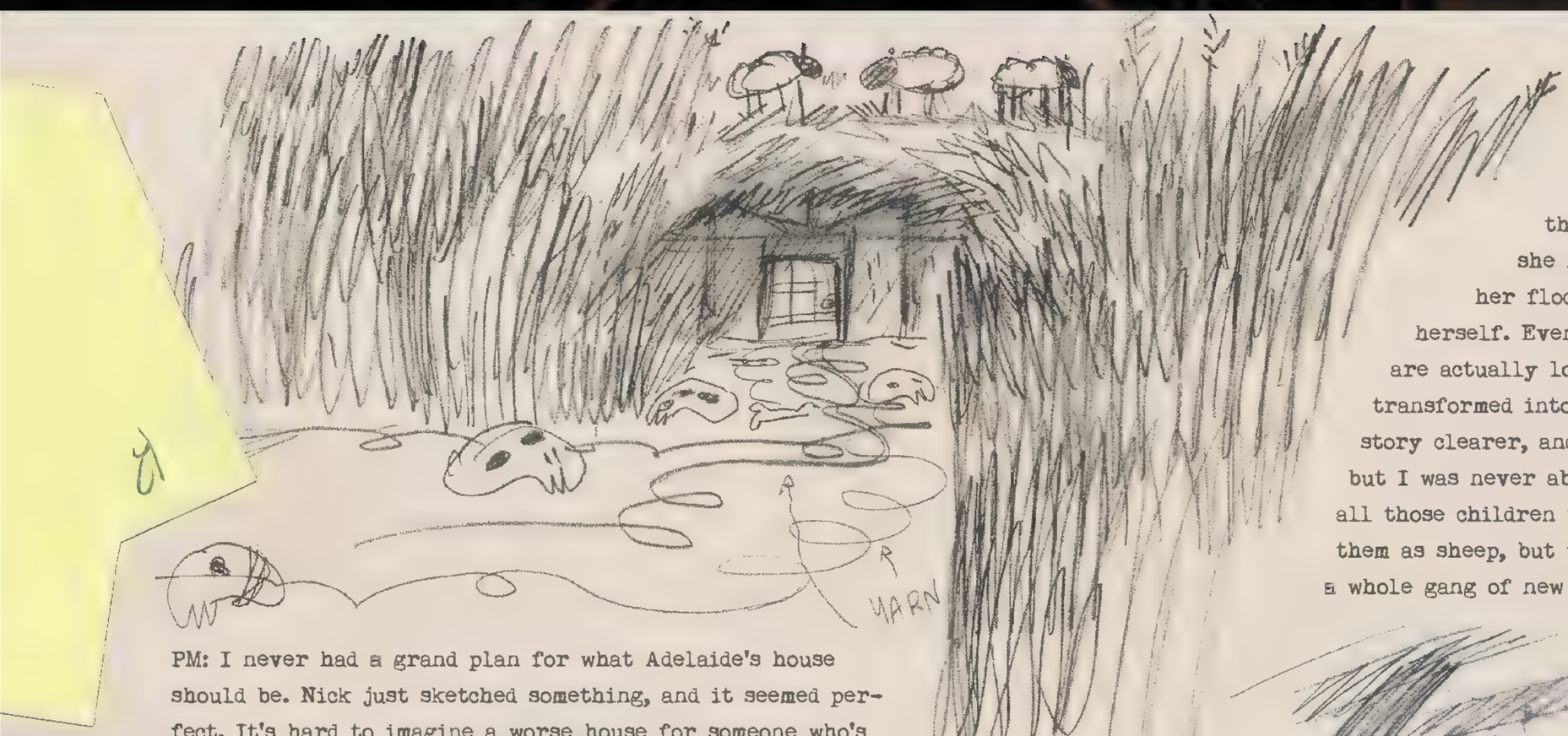
fiddle player

PM: Wirt's disguise was supposed to be like in The Little Rascals when they step on each other's shoulders and go to the bank, wearing a trench coat, to borrow money. A lot of people have asked me if Greg's drum face was inspired by Neutral Milk Hotel's album cover. The answer is probably yes, even if it wasn't intentional.

Character Design: Jim Campbell, Nick Cross, Laura Park
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler
Color Styling: Carol Wyatt
Art Direction: Nick Cross

PM: There were so many frogs on this boat! Our storyboard supervisor, Jeff Myers, and our revisionist, Fran Krause, had to go through and track every frog in the ship, labeling them properly and making sure there weren't any mistakes. Digital eMation had even more work: actually drawing and animating all those frogs! This episode was exhausting. Luckily chapter 7 came next, which was very light on design.

Character Design: Nick Cross, Laura Park. Background Layout: Nick Cross, Chris Tsirgiotis. Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

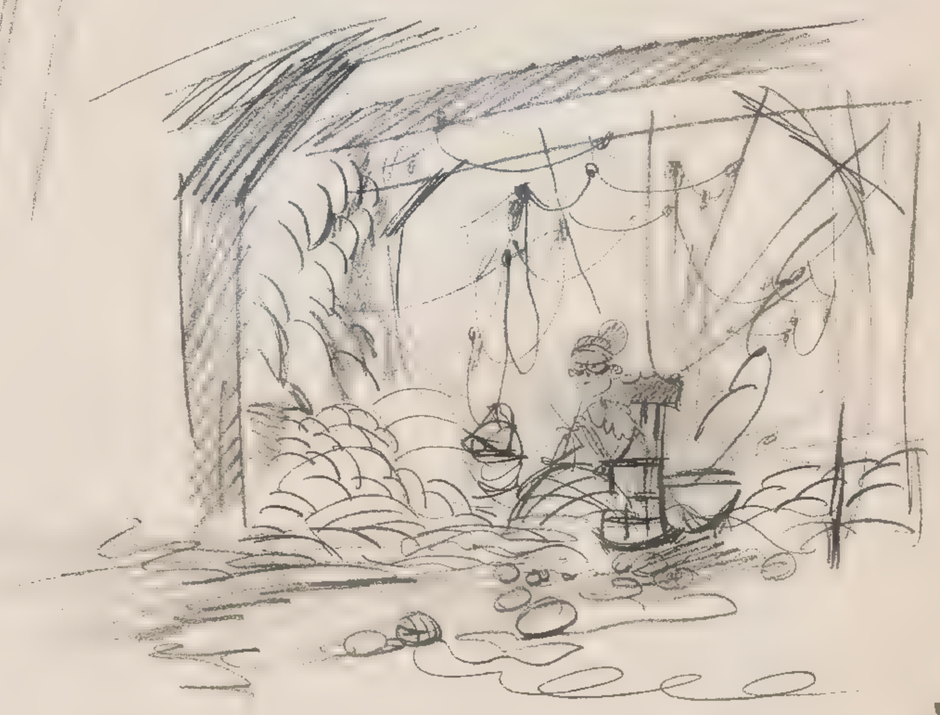


PM: I never had a grand plan for what Adelaide's house should be. Nick just sketched something, and it seemed perfect. It's hard to imagine a worse house for someone who's deathly afraid of drafts. It makes you wonder how Adelaide ended up there, barricaded in this crumbling little stone hovel. I have my own ideas, but I'll never tell anybody as long as I live.

I think Nick wanted to have sheep skeletons scattered around the outside of her house, but I nixed that for some reason. Not sure why.

Development Sketches: Nick Cross. Character and Prop Design: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale
Background Layout: Nick Cross, Jim Smith. Background Painting: Nick Cross, German Orozco

PM: At some point, we discussed Adelaide keeping a flock of sheep at her house, from which she gathered her wool. In that version Adelaide told Beatrice she needed a child servant to tend her flock, because she couldn't go outside herself. Eventually it's revealed that the sheep are actually lost children who Adelaide magically transformed into sheep. This would have made her story clearer, and provided a nice visual to boot, but I was never able to figure out what to do with all those children turned sheep. We couldn't just leave them as sheep, but we also couldn't suddenly introduce a whole gang of new "lost children" characters.



Amalia Levari: The pair of scissors that turns birds back into people was one of my favorite visual elements from the series. We were trying to think of Adelaide's character and an object that would fit. I definitely pushed for Adelaide to exist in a world that was made of textiles: wool, yarn, and thread. When we got to the part about the specific object, I called up my mom because she taught me how to knit and crochet. She sent me a pair of bird scissors. The fact that they ended up in the series made me really happy. It was my tribute to what my mom taught me.

Background Layout: Jim Smith
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

Episode 7

"The Ringing of the Bell"

"You have entered the house of doom, children! Your doom."

—AUNTIE WHISPERS

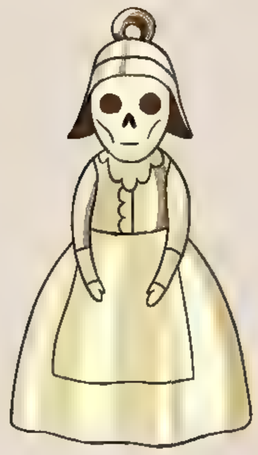
Nick Cross: Episode 7 was the original pilot, so Pat had already gone through figuring out what Auntie Whispers should look like a couple of years before we started.

Tom Herpich: This story was a big part of why I wanted to help out on the project. It was originally intended to be about six or seven minutes long, so it needed a lot more to become a normal eleven-minute episode. The middle was already done, so I storyboarded the lead-up, with Wirt and Greg trudging through the woods and having a run-in with the Woodsman, as well as the ending, where they deal with Lorna's monster form and learn about Auntie Whispers's true virtuous nature. Drawing pretty forest compositions was nice, but what stands out most in my memory was how refreshing it was to be drawing characters with necks and eye whites. I'd been drawing Finn and Jake on *Adventure Time* for about five years at that point—and I love to draw them—but any time you want either of them to turn their head or look up and down, it's always a little problem to solve.

Patrick McHale: "What are the black turtles all about?" This is the most common question I'm asked about the series. We never planned on explaining them, and I don't plan to explain them now, but I can talk a bit about Auntie Whispers.

It helps to understand Auntie Whispers if you view her as a sort of sin eater. She ingests those turtles and removes them from the Unknown. She is mostly benevolent, but the burden is clearly affecting her both physically and mentally, like the dog in chapter 1. Somehow she's able to handle it without going completely mad.

There's a folk tradition in many cultures of purposefully including an imperfection in your work. It's an exercise in humility: grounding your work as manmade, rather than divine. I've sometimes joked with Nick that the mystery of the black turtles was our "imperfect stitch."



NC: Cartoon Network's only Standards and Practices note was that Lorna's teeth were too sharp. "The teeth are too sharp--square them off" seemed like a really strange note to us, because that wasn't the scary part. It was the context. But we just took the note and squared them off, which ended up looking weirder. When we put all the shading in, she was really scary--it's all in the lighting.

PM: In this episode we were afraid that Auntie Whispers's creepiness would be lost in the final animation if we didn't provide some special poses. I wish we could have done more special poses throughout the whole series, but we were just so busy.

Character and Prop Designs: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale
Mouth Chart: Phil Rynda. Storyboards: Tom Herpich
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis. Background Painting: Levon Jihanian
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler. Art Direction: Nick Cross

(W) go ahead and look for Beatrice.

(W) you can do anything you want, alright?

(G) Anything?!

(G) That's a lot of POWER!

(G) WIRT I dunt know if I'm ready to. Ride a herd of scorpions into Space & start a project Society on the moon!

SFX: SMASH (tree falls)

(G) WIRT!

(G) oh no, did I knock down that tree with my powers...

(W) Greg look - axe marks. Someone chopped it down...

Yeah... tree just came at me — ouch nowhere...

WOODSMAN: Indeed.

No. I really should have been a dirt farmer. To be more historically accurate, but we had to make sure that Lorna was able to finish her work when Wirt helped her. In a self-contained fairy tale the story might have been that Auntie Whispers tells Lorna to sweep the floor until it's clean, but it can never be clean because it's just dirt.

PM: For anyone who's into flowers, the forget-me-nots are a cute little visual joke as Wirt and Lorna are saying their goodbyes: "See you again sometime. Don't forget me."

Background Layouts: Nick Cross, Jim Smith, Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Nick Cross, Levon Jihanian, German Orozco
Art Direction: Nick Cross

Background Layout: Jim Smith
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

Episode 8

"Babes in the Wood"

"Star, oh, star up in the sky. Guide my dreams with light that shines.
Help me know just what to do, to get Wirt home, and also me, too.
And if you don't, I don't care, I'll pull down your underwear."

—GREG

"Babes in the Wood" marries two of *Over the Garden Wall*'s biggest influences: horrifying folktales and vintage cartoons. The title is a reference to a sixteenth-century story about an uncle who sends two orphans out into the woods to die so he can steal their inheritance. Two classic animated films, *Hansel and Gretel: An Opera Fantasy* (a stop-motion adaptation of Engelbert Humperdinck's opera) and the *Silly Symphony* short *Wynken, Blynken and Nod*, helped inspire Greg's ascension to Cloud City after dozing off on a pile of leaves. The story also incorporates the Old North Wind, a nod to "The King of the Golden River" by John Ruskin, a mid-nineteenth-century folktale about a prosperous town flooded by wind.

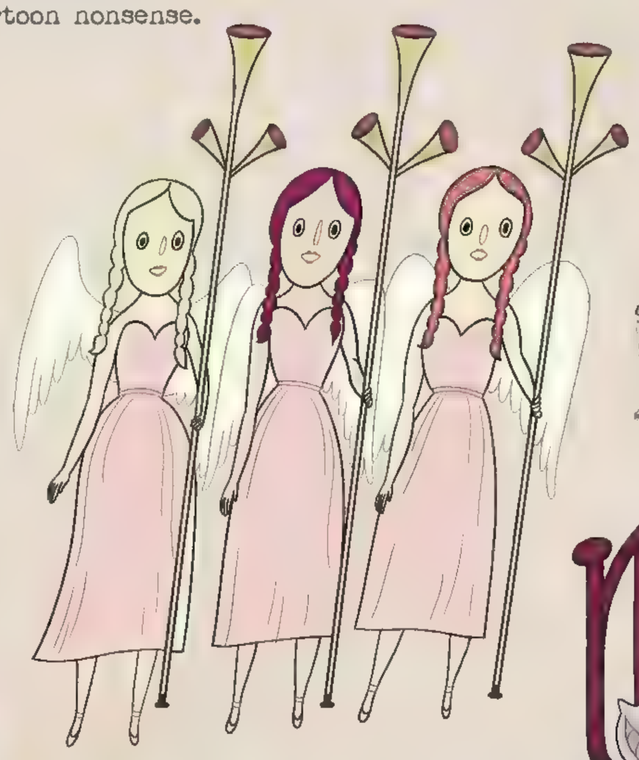
But the fantasy of Greg's imagination is soon juxtaposed with the sheer bleakness of winter—the soothing auburn rays of fall finally transition to the snowdrifts of November in this episode, with Wirt frantically searching for his missing brother. Background artist Chris Tsirgiotis, working digitally, felt that his work finally felt like the paintings he usually created with a brush and canvas.

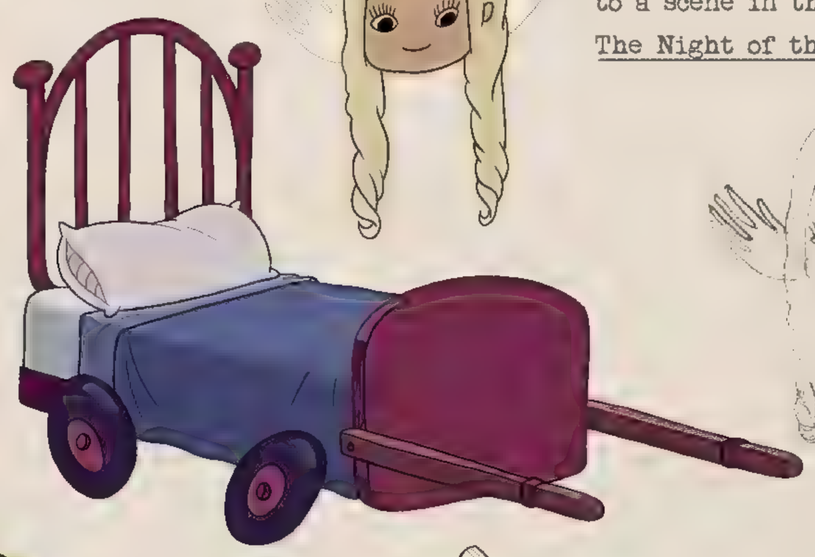
Nick Cross: We tried to make this episode look like an old cartoon from the 1930s. Back then, there were two types of color film in use for animation: Technicolor and Cinecolor. Technicolor was a four-color separation technique where the light was divided into magenta, cyan, yellow, and black and then combined onto one print. It was a patented process, which made it more expensive, so a lot of studios used the Cinecolor technique, a three-strip process. As a result, some cartoons from that time period skew toward blue and red-orange without any subtlety. We did a lot of research and had to do a lot of color correcting to try to make it fit that style.

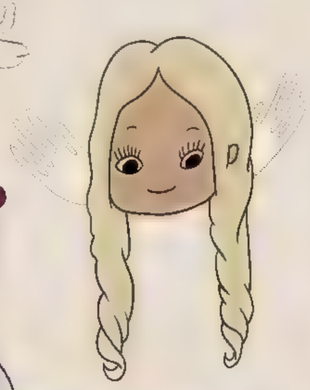
Character Designs: Graham Falk
Background Layout: Jim Smith
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

PM: Graham Falk did a ton of amazing designs for this episode. We were blown away. It was like Christmas when Nick and I got to open the folder and look through all his weird little animals and angels. But some of them were a little too weird to include.

PM: When we wrote the outline, Greg's dream sequence was about heavenly little cherubs inspired by old Valentine's Day cards, with forget-me-nots and little hearts everywhere. When Mark Bodnar boarded it, he pushed it in a more cartoony direction, which made much more sense for Greg's character. Initially it still featured half-naked babies, as per my original request, but we soon realized that Greg's paradise wouldn't be a bunch of angel babies . . . it would be crazy cartoon nonsense.







PM: It was really funny to us that Graham just wrote "Welcome!" on every single sign. And they're all carrying signs, too. It feels so innocent, and befits a Greg parade.

PM: The disembodied heads that appear in the sky were a nod to a scene in the 1955 film <u>The Night of the Hunter</u>.

Character Design: Nick Cross, Graham Falk. Prop Design: Dylan Forman. Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler. Color Styling: Carol Wyatt Art Direction: Nick Cross

PM: When we saw those birds flying around her head, we said, "Ah, that's it. That's perfect."

PM: Some say that this old man is actually Wirt in an alternate timeline, trapped in the Unknown carrying a lantern. I don't say that, but some say that.

PM: I love those underwater sea creatures. I wish we could have used them in the show. I'm hesitant to even include them in this book because I'd like to see them used for something else.

Development Sketches: Jim Campbell
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: German Orozco

Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: German Orozco

ETERNAL GARDEN

Episode 9

"Into the Unknown"

"That tape has got poetry and clarinet on it, Greg! Poetry and clarinet!"

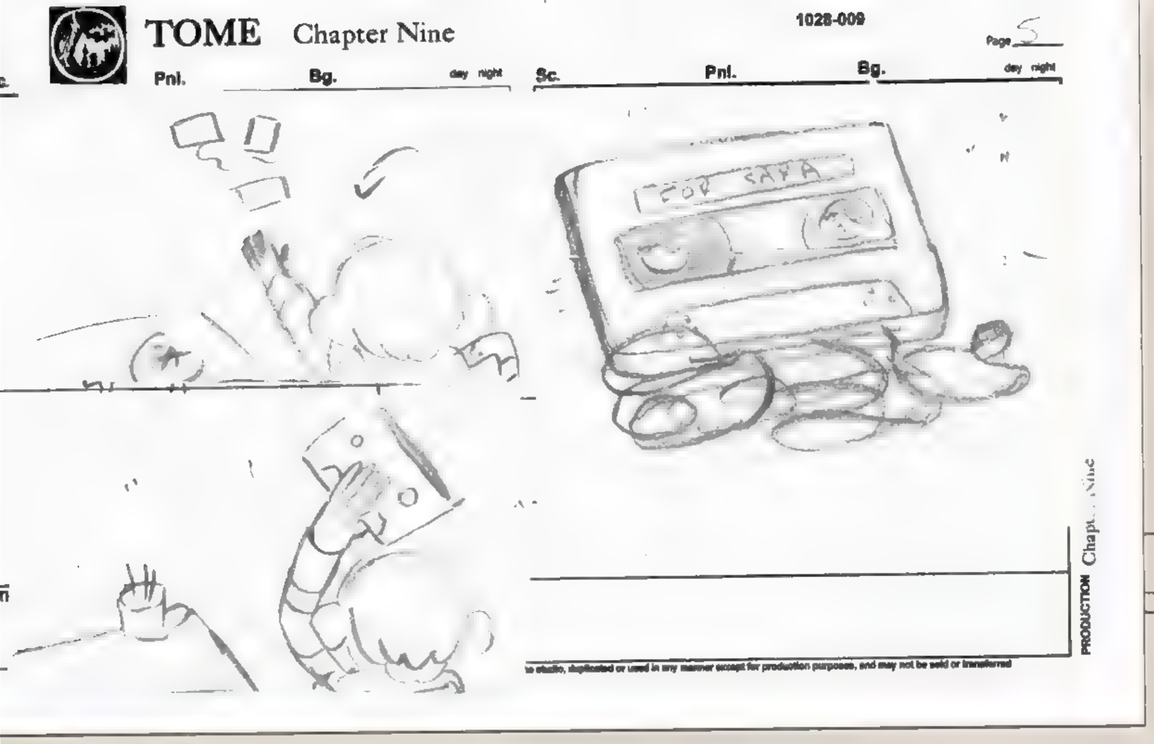
—WIRT

Visually, Nick Cross transitioned from the warm, candlelit glow of the Unknown to antiseptic blue lights pouring out of windows onto wet streets—dry Halloweens were a rarity when he was growing up in his native Canada. The writers and artists also watched a Dick's Sporting Goods advertisement called "Every Pitch" and the music video to Grimes's song "Oblivion" to help them capture the feel of bright, diffuse lights flooding a sports stadium.

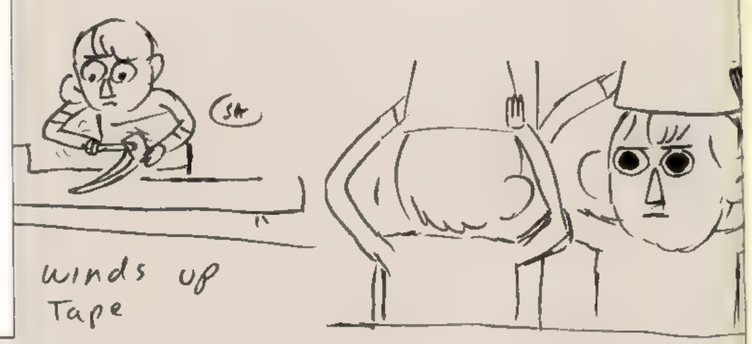
Patrick McHale: We had some leeway to mess with people's expectations in chapter 9. After episode 8, everyone is anxious to see what will happen next. But instead of telling you how the end will play out, we throw you into a totally new, unfamiliar setting. It's meant to disorient the viewer and echo Wirt's feeling in chapter 1, when he first finds himself lost in the Unknown. "Where are we?" Little by little you piece together that you're watching the backstory.

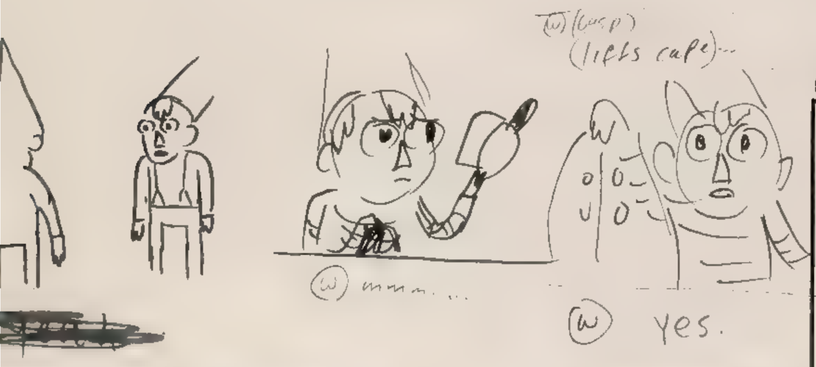
This episode needed to be light, funny, modern, and nostalgic in order to slowly calm you into forgetting the troubles of the previous episode. We even added little sitcom-style musical stings. And by the time you're comfortable and settled into watching this story, we knock you back into the drama unfolding in the Unknown. The idea was to make the audience feel as empathetic for Wirt's situation as possible.

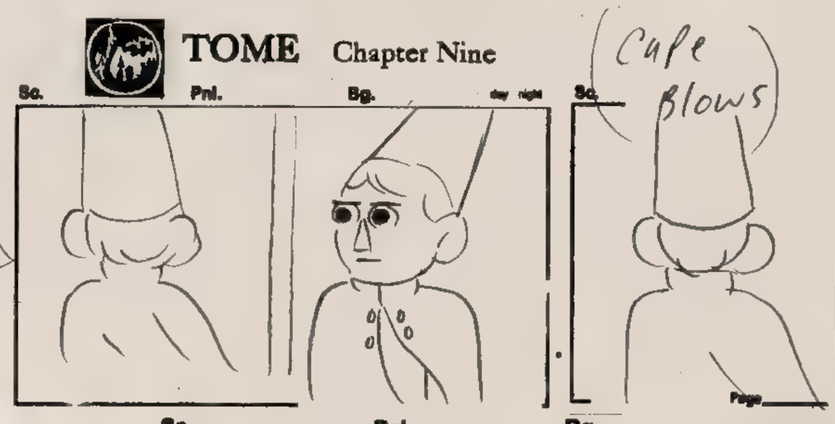
Cole Sanchez deserves a great deal of the credit for shaping the overall tone of this episode, bringing in a lot of personal experience and making it really funny and relatable. But everyone involved in the show definitely put some of their own awkward teenage years into this one.

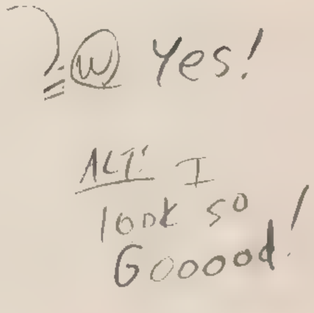


PM: This is what Wirt wishes he looked like in his costume, his cape romantically flowing in the wind. We referenced this sketch when Wirt is walking into the snow to find Greg at the end of this episode. He's finally the romantic hero.









Character Design: Nick Cross, Patrick McHale, Mikkel Sommer
Prop Design: Eunji Lee Roess. Storyboards: Cole Sanchez
Background Layout: Clarke Snyder. Background Painting: Levon Jihanian
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler. Color Styling: Carol Wyatt. Art Direction: Nick Cross

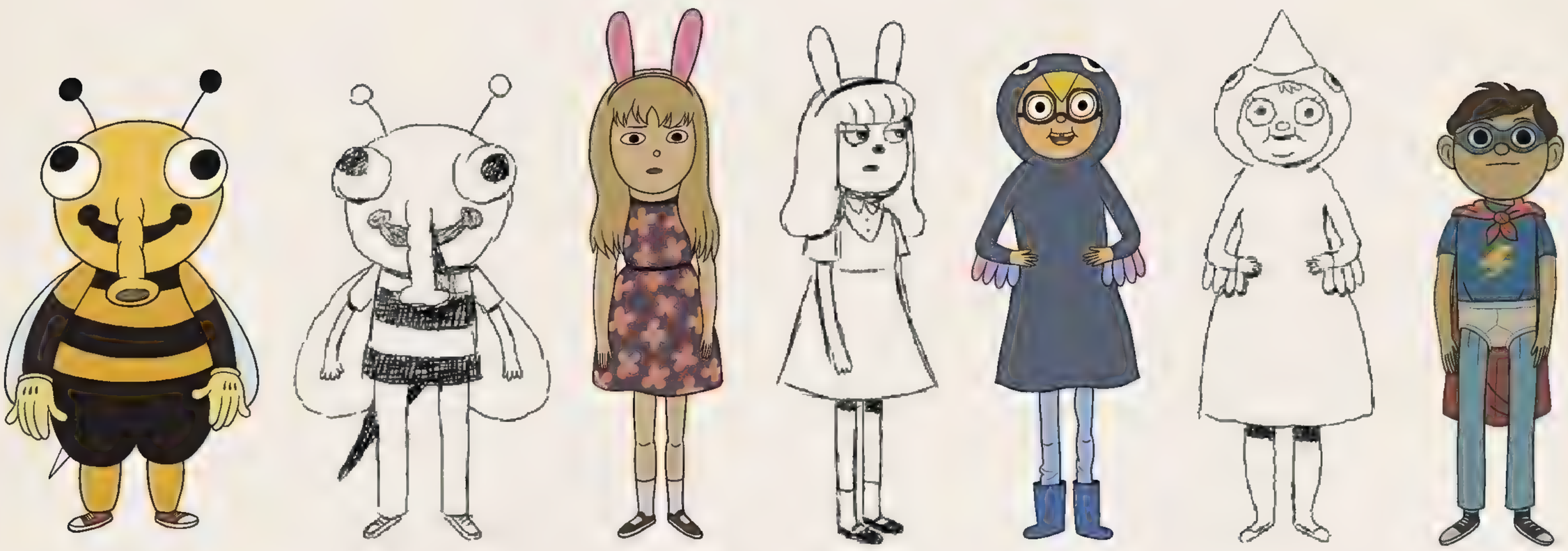
PM: Originally, in Tome of the Unknown, I'd imagined Wirt as extremely high-strung, anxious, and self-analyzing. It was a caricature of certain aspects of my own personality, combined with certain aspects of my friend Vi-Dieu Nguyen. I remember Vi being particularly notorious in college for accidentally blurting out something insulting, then digging a deeper and deeper hole for himself as he tried to talk his way out of it. It was strangely endearing, actually. So although Wirt's character eventually changed a bit, I was excited to get Vi involved in storyboarding episode 9.

Jason Funderberker's outfit was roughly based on my high-school senior portrait photo, but it sort of happened by accident. We decided that a kid like Jason Funderberker would probably wear a suit all the time. Coloring it, I thought a green seventies polyester suit would be funny, like the one I wore in high school. And then I realized that the hairstyle Mikkel gave Funderberker was the same hairstyle I had in high school. And then I realized . . . Oh no, I was Jason Funderberker all along!

The name "Jason Funderberker" came from Amalia. It could be the name of your embarrassing teenage crush . . . It could be a bully, or a nerd, or a jock, or a class clown. It's a strangely mysterious name, in a high-school sort of way.

PM: I'm not a sports fan, but I have a great fondness for this kind of lighting. I wanted to make sure we had a sports event, because the lighting and mood is so extraordinary. It looks so different from anything else in the series.

PM: This is the original Sara sketch. I was really happy with her weird costume, but she never looked quite right in the final picture. I think it was because we didn't fully work out the physics of her costume, and how she should turn in 3D space. We probably should have done special poses for her.



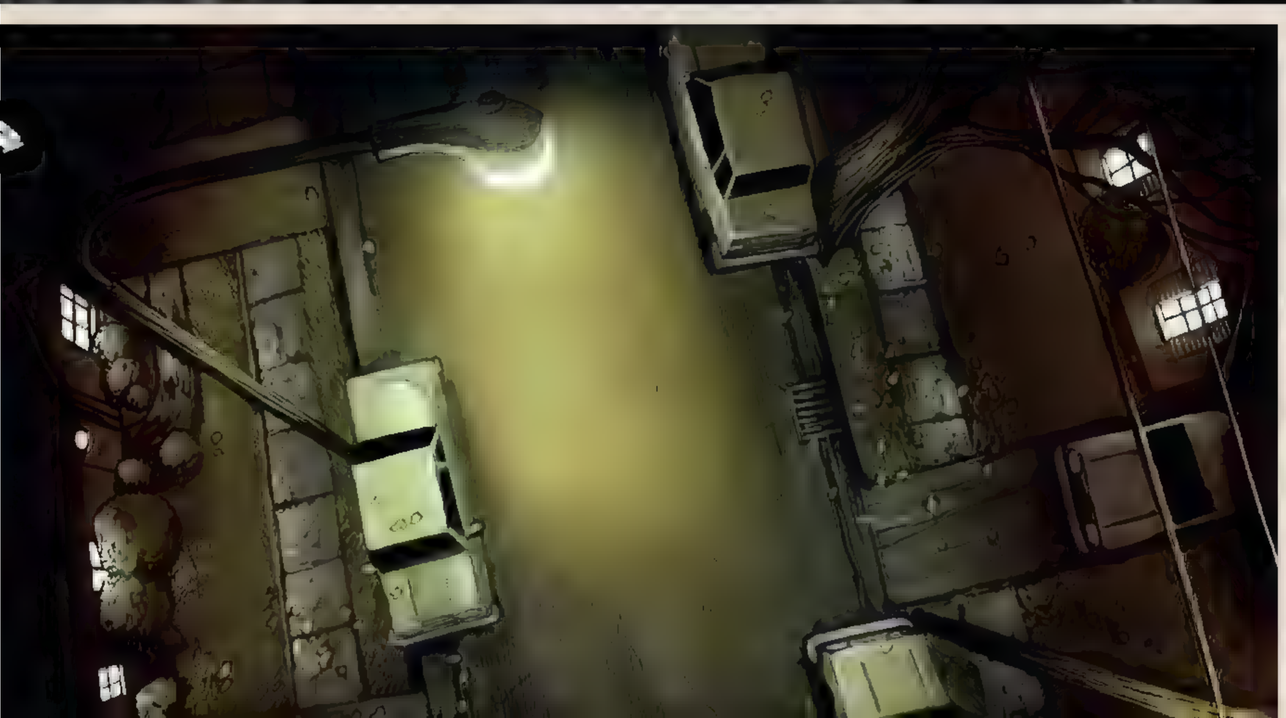
NC: We were trying to design homemade-looking costumes. I remember as a kid everyone would have those plastic costumes that you could buy at the supermarket. A Darth Vader plastic mask and a smock that said "Darth Vader" on it. I hated those things. It wasn't a real costume, because it didn't look like him.

PM: We used almost all of these designs in the show. We looked at a lot of old photos of Halloween costume parties in the seventies, and Mikkel just ran with it. All those masks felt like some kind of metaphor for high-school identity. Meanwhile, Wirt doesn't even know who he wants to pretend to be. His costume doesn't make any sense, even to him. Sara's costume doesn't make sense either, but she doesn't give a hoot.

Character Design: Nick Cross, Mikkel Sommer
Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler
Color Styling: Carol Wyatt
Art Direction: Nick Cross

NC: Every house has blue light in the [illegible] TV is on. We were trying to make these scenes look very different from the Unknown, so you know you're in a different world. In the Unknown there's more natural light: candles, sunlight, or lanterns. All the lights here are electric. The street-lights are really yellow and green, and blue light comes from the houses. Everything looks artificial and weird. The Unknown looks like a fantasy world, and this looks like the real world.

Background Layout: Nick [illegible] Clark Snyder
Background Painting: Nick [illegible] Clark Snyder



PM: I love the mood of this party house. I think Jim Smith filled it with a bunch of specific details from his own life. That rug and those lamps make it feel like such a real place to me.

Backgrounds: Nick Cross, Levon Jihanian, German Ponce, Jim Smith, [illegible] Snyder

Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

Episode 10

"The Unknown"

"How the gentle wind beckons through the leaves as autumn colors fall.
Dancing in a swirl of golden memories, the loveliest lies of all."

—JASON FUNDERBURKER, THE FROG

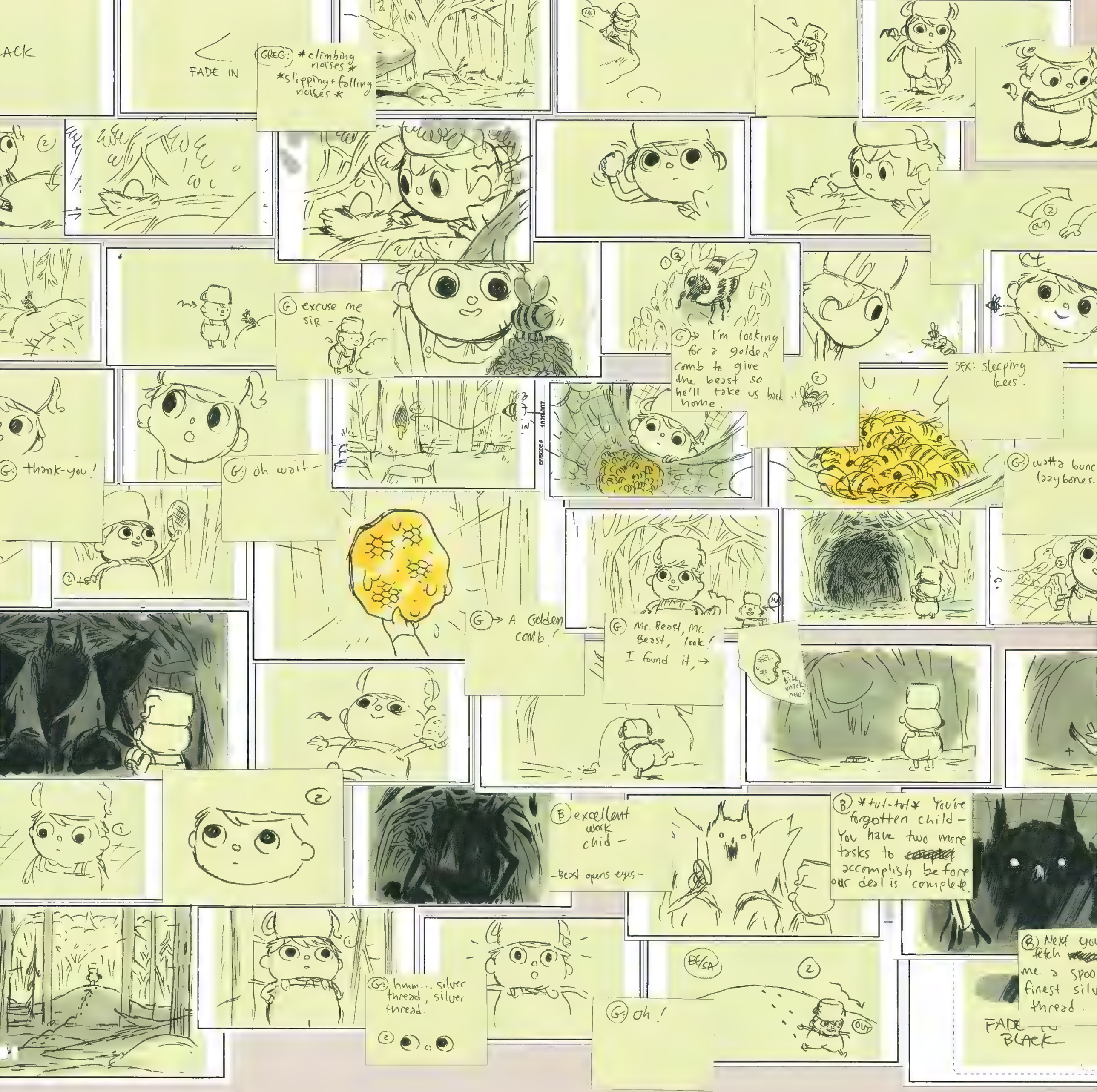
Patrick McHale: Nick and I wanted to keep the color theory simple for this episode: the first act is white, the second act is black, and the third act—the happy ending—is full of color.

This episode is all about the Beast, so I wanted it to feel like an opera. The lighting in the second act is meant to feel like a stage. I even considered adding the sound of an orchestra warming up and ambient crowd noise throughout the whole episode to make it feel like you're watching a live performance. I wanted the emotions to be more heightened than ever, so you're not sure if it'll turn out to be a comedy or a tragedy.

This episode was rewritten so many times. I relied on Bert Youn a lot with this episode; he reboarded the second act again and again as I rewrote things. I wasn't actually sure if the episode even worked until I saw the final color animation with music and sound effects. Every part of production was important to tell the story properly.

Amalia Levari: So much of the humor in the series comes from Greg's fearlessness. The points of suspense and actual fear—the stakes—come out of his courage, but also his obliviousness. One of my favorite scenes is his encounter with the Beast because of how casually a child can answer degrees of evil. The degree to which the Beast is sinister doesn't register with Greg, because his worldview doesn't make room for that caliber of ill intent. Being able to take a character like that into actually dangerous situations was really challenging and really thrilling. We wanted to be true to his character and we wanted to be true to the impulses that he has, which tend to vacillate between really funny and kind of terrifying.

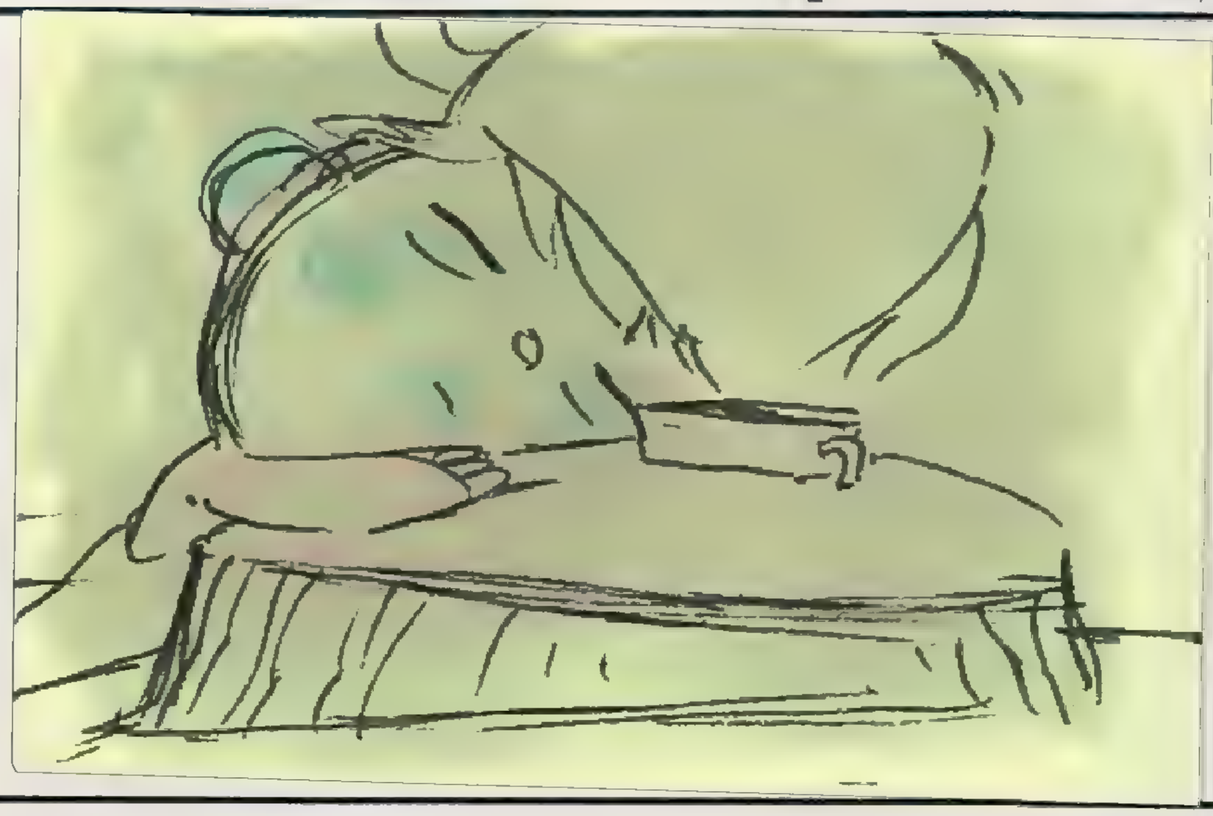
It was nice to see people connect with the sort of person Greg brings out in Wirt.


ACK
FADE IN
GREG: *climbing noises*
slipping + falling noises
G excuse me sir -
G thank-you!
G oh wait -
G A Golden comb!
G I'm looking for a golden comb to give the beast so he'll take us back home.
SFX: sleeping bees.
G watta bunch lazybones.
G Mr. Beast, Mr. Beast, look! I found it, →
bite marks now?
B excellent work child -
-Beast opens eyes-
B *tut-tut* You've forgotten child - You have two more tasks to accomplish before our deal is complete.
G hmm... silver thread, silver thread.
G Oh!
OUT
FADE TO BLACK

Tom Herpich: Almost all of the storyboarding I did for episode 10, which was about half an episode's worth, ended up on the cutting room floor. And if I remember right, the boards I did were to replace another chunk of storyboard that had already gotten cut. That was all a side effect of the overall story still being worked on while storyboarding was underway.

Pnl. Bg. day night

Sc. Pnl. Bg. day night



wnnn) ... I'm
so ... *sleepy
sigh*

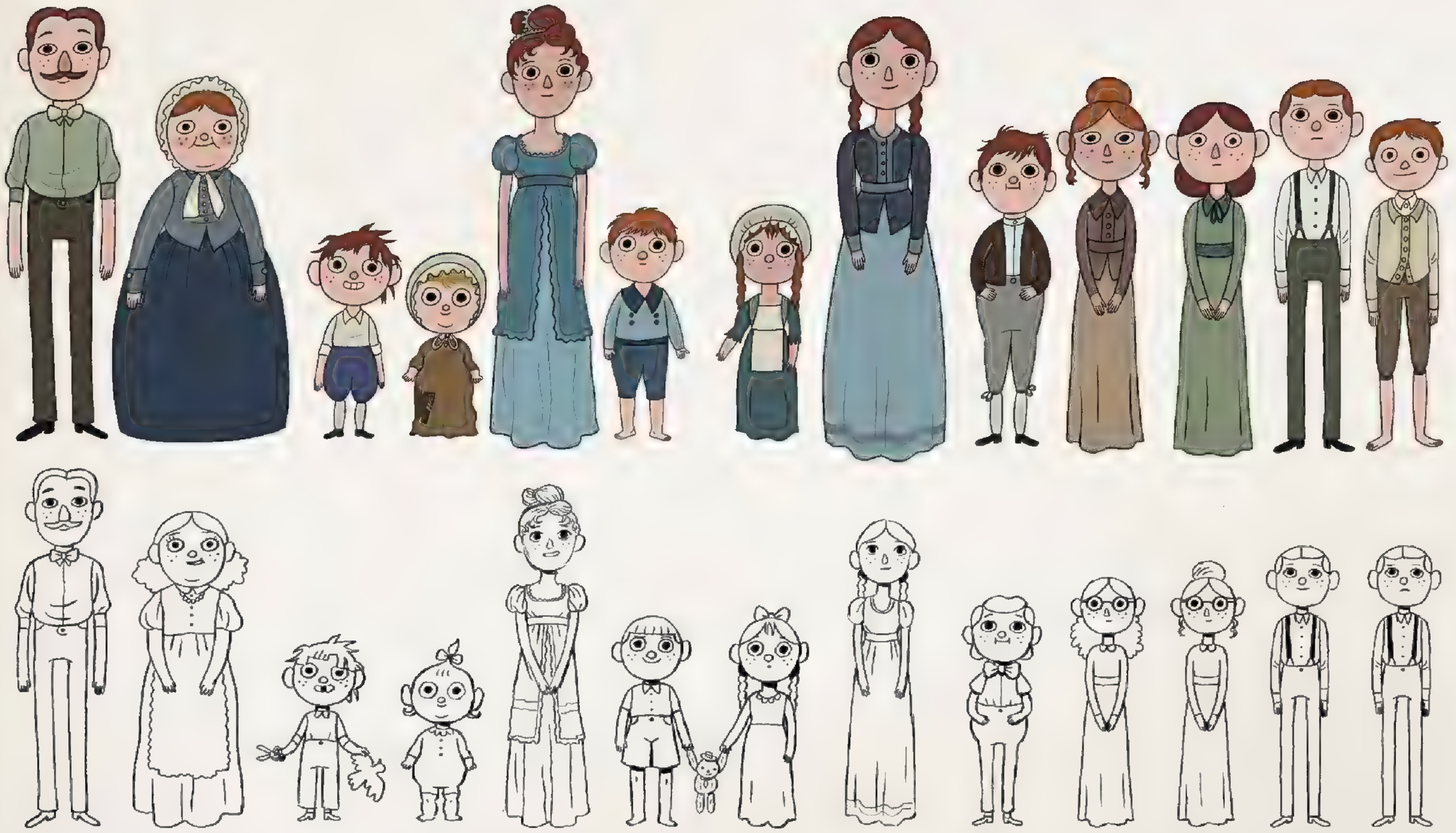
Storyboards: Tom Herpich
Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

EPISODE # 1028-007

EPISODE Chapter Seven

PM: When Tom and I discussed how to make the ending more impactful and emotional, I talked about Greg being all frail and twisted. Tom did this sketch, and it just felt so sad. It really evoked the feeling we needed for our ending.

Sketch: Tom Herpich
Character Design: Nick Cross, Mikkel Sommer
Prop Design: Nick Cross. Design Clean Up: Miranda Dressler
Color Styling: Carol Wyatt



Mikkel Sommer: This is an important, emotional moment: we see Beatrice's family, and we see her go back to them. Her likeness had to look like the bird a little bit. Likable and strong. And they gave me a list of the family members. There are, like, three sets of twins. I don't even know. It was a lot of kids. I think they decided that some of them were twins just because you wouldn't have so many kids unless there were twins. I guess it's possible. It's a little character-design cheat.

PM: The idea here is that the frog is feeling whatever Greg is feeling. It's almost like we can tell what's going on with Greg just by seeing how the frog is doing. I really like Greg's ears in this model. They look so cold.

Amalia Levari: The lantern is a really good symbol of how wily the Beast is. He's able to keep people's fear stoked, and that's where all of his power lies. The Beast is harvesting the energy of people. In the Unknown, when you lose hope, you become an Edelwood tree, and that's the thing that fuels him. It happens organically.

Pan across→ lantern light appears through trees in darkness

"You There!"
woodsman quickly comes out from behind trees

"Growl"
light shows only part of the Beast- mostly in dark

"STOP AT ONCE!"
close up - glaring light

2

"IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD WOODSMAN"

"IF You want to keep your daughter alive..."

"We MUST make another..."

"TREE.."

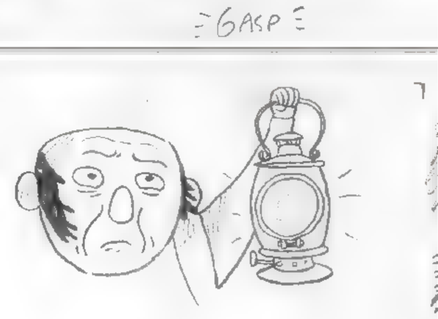
=GASP=

"Your lantern would go out"
- looks at lantern -

"You Monster!"

"OF course if I were to set him free..."
mostly obscured by shadows

"Your lantern would go out"
- looks at lantern -



Beast - "And we wouldnt want that"

4

5

The spirits of children are quite meaningless things. (leans on staff)

"SEE HERE!"
Turns towards Beast.

"I fought You for th lantern before"
- steps up toward be

"And I'm not afraid to fight you again"

Beast→"YOU FOOL! Don't you realize"

Beast "BY Fighting me you are only killing your daughter

Beast→"YOU FOOL! Don't you rea
=CLANK!=

=CLANK! CLANK!= Fighting c
Pan

7

7B

Beast Painting: Nick Cross. Storyboards: Jim Campbell. Background Layout: Chris Tsirgiotis. Background Painting: Levon Jihanian

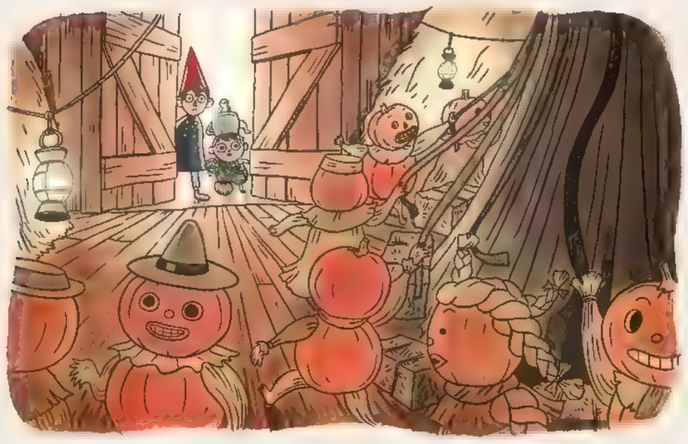
PM: Jim's fight sequence was so cool looking, but this was before the Beast's redesign, so you see how far we got before we re-designed him; we were already on episode 10. We included that last shot for sure in the series. It was so neat to have all those black shadows of trees and then you have blackness.

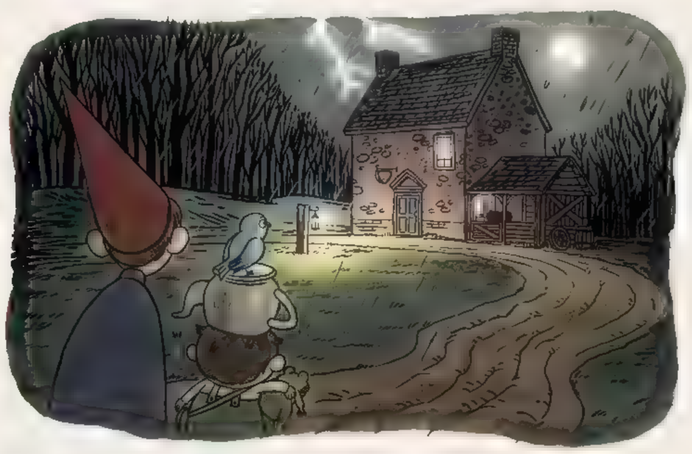
NC: At some point, Pat said, "Maybe the Beast could have a lot of holes in him." He had mentioned how his wife hates little dots and holes, and it led to us discovering something called trypophobia. As soon as we put some holes in him, Pat was like, "No, no, we can't do that. My wife will kill me."

Background Layout: Nick Cross, Jim Smith Chris Tsirgiotis
Background Painting: Nick Cross, Levon Jihanian, German Orozco

PART FIVE
Over the Garden Wall
Ephemera
Art: Jim Campbell

Read & Listen Art: Jim Campbell





READ & LISTEN BOOK

Before *Over the Garden Wall* debuted, the Cartoon Network publicity department sent out a read-and-listen vinyl to the press. The story was written by Patrick McHale and illustrated by Jim Campbell. The concept paid homage to Peter Pan and Disneyland Records, labels that licensed comic books, TV, and movies to create new stories on book-and-record sets that combined reading, voice acting, and sound effects. Jack Jones narrated the record.

Patrick McHale: The idea was that it's the frog narrating. At certain points the record deviates from what's written in the book. If you're reading along, he starts ad-libbing and talking about being a frog. And then he says, "Anyway, it doesn't matter . . ." and picks up where he left off.

The book concludes with a happy ending, with the frog singing. Then the record adds more to the story: "But things aren't always as they seem . . ." And things start getting dark and creepy, with the Beast singing "Come Wayward Souls."

On the record, we added the sounds of water and people yelling and the train. When you're supposed to turn the page, you hear the steam engine train, which seems cute and old fashioned, but is actually dark if you know the show.

Ch. 1 : extended couch song & remix chase
Ch. 2 : extend patient & maybe ext potts,
Ch. 3 : ext adelaide & langree abcs, tades?
Ch. 4 : title, highwayman
Ch. 6 : send
Ch. 7 :
Ch. 8 : link beast,
Ch. 9 : ext 2nd angelo,
Ch. 10 : autotune beast, extend this is a bit
sneak in rejects:
boss nova
corradio
dance xxxxx over garden song
me and my brother row

Come on now young strangers
May I rent you someone,s son?
Now,d you find this depot
cuz it aint where you belong

You will pass a graveyard
Stones worn by the years
The train'll stop a minute
But don't let it leave you here

The coachman is my brother
The
The enginerr's my friend
They'll get you acquainted
By the time you reach the end

The journey is a long one
It'll take you all around
Life rushing by your windows
Before it lays you down

Where'this old train's going
You can't come back from
You can leave your baggage here
Because we'll need it when youre gone

Photograph and Sketches: The Blasting Company

MUSIC

THE BLASTING COMPANY

To complement the sterling diversity of art and aesthetic in *Over the Garden Wall*'s visuals, the show needed a score that spanned the same centuries blended throughout the Unknown. Patrick McHale's initial plan was to reference genres that touched on Dixieland, opera, jazz ballads, eastern European folk music, and turn-of-the-century blues—a dynamic soundtrack to fit the shifting tones of each episode. Writer Amalia Levari recommended as composers the Blasting Company, a trio of musicians stationed in Los Angeles. The group—consisting of Josh Kaufman, Justin Rubenstein, and Brandon Armstrong—displayed a staggering range of genre and instrument expertise. McHale sent them a copy of the pitch bible, and the trio responded with music recorded on Kaufman's iPhone. One of the tracks in the show—the haunting piano lullaby that plays over the credits—is from that original recording.

But the Blasting Company had more in common with *Over the Garden Wall*'s vision than just musical taste. Kaufman and Rubenstein are half brothers who admit that their personalities overlap eerily with those of Wirt and Greg. "The older brother gets a lot of things done; he's responsible. And the other one just messes everything up," Kaufman said. "I felt like I was the younger brother."

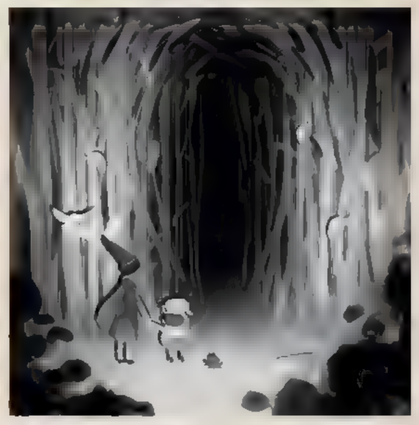
For many songs, artists and friends offered melodies that the Blasting Company helped shape and build. "Potatoes and Molasses" was written by David Stevenson, an acquaintance of Jim Campbell. Pendleton Ward wrote an outline of "The Highwayman," while Mark Bodnar both wrote and sang "The Old North Wind" from "Babes in the Wood," his voice slowed to a bass in postproduction.

VOICES OF THE UNKNOWN

McHale and the Blasting Company collaborated to recruit musicians for cameo characters. They drew from the Los Angeles folk and bluegrass community, and also sought out old favorites of McHale's, including pop standard icon Jack Jones (the voice of Greg's frog) and opera veteran Samuel Ramey (the Beast).

Chris Isaak, known for his deep-throated tunes honoring fifties blues and classic rock, performed the song "Patient Is the Night" for the episode "Hard Times at the Huskin' Bee." The song was written in homage to the jazz ballads of Hoagy Carmichael.

Ukulele revivalist Janet Klein had played with Kaufman on her 2015 album *It's the Girl*! Her passion for early nineteenth-century jazz and Dixie made her a perfect fit for *Over the Garden Wall*'s exploration of vintage Americana. Miss Langtree from "Schooltown Follies" was developed specifically for the singer/songwriter.



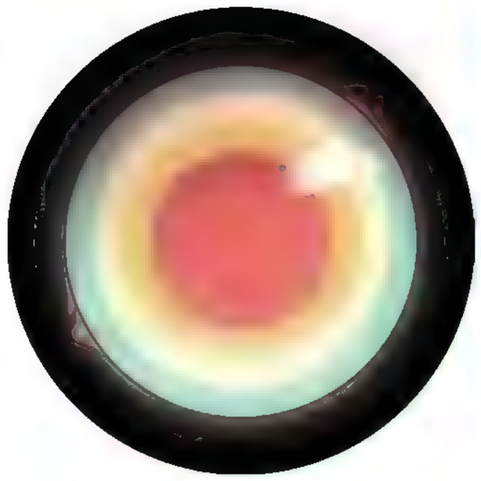
Sam Wolfe Connelly: These are the initial thumbnails for the cover of the album, along with the border design for the sheet music. In the end we went with the cover idea on the far left since it felt more in tune with the nature of the cartoon and the journey of the characters.

Art: Sam Wolfe Connelly
Images courtesy of Mondo

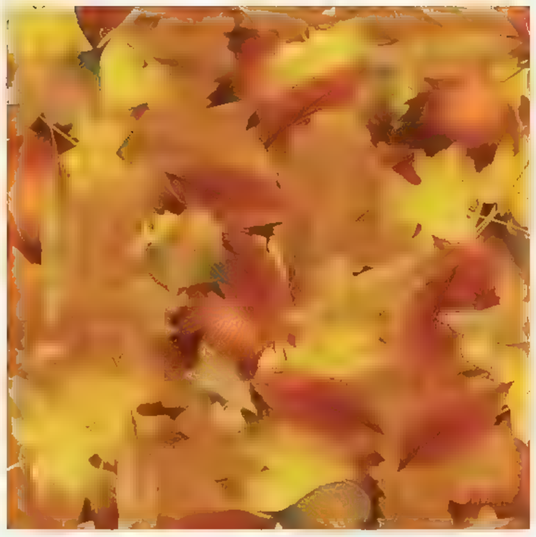
MONDO VINYL & CASSETTE

Mondo, a company that produces pop culture posters, records, clothes, and other materials, released a limited vinyl record of the *Over the Garden Wall* soundtrack and score in July 2016. The album included thirty-two tracks with a twenty-page booklet featuring the lyrics of every song and sheet music for four of the compositions. The record sleeve, vinyl, and booklet were designed by Sam Wolfe Connelly, an illustrator whose black-and-white chiaroscuro illustrations inspired McHale when he was developing the series.

SWC: This is the final drawing of Wirt and Greg for the interior spread.



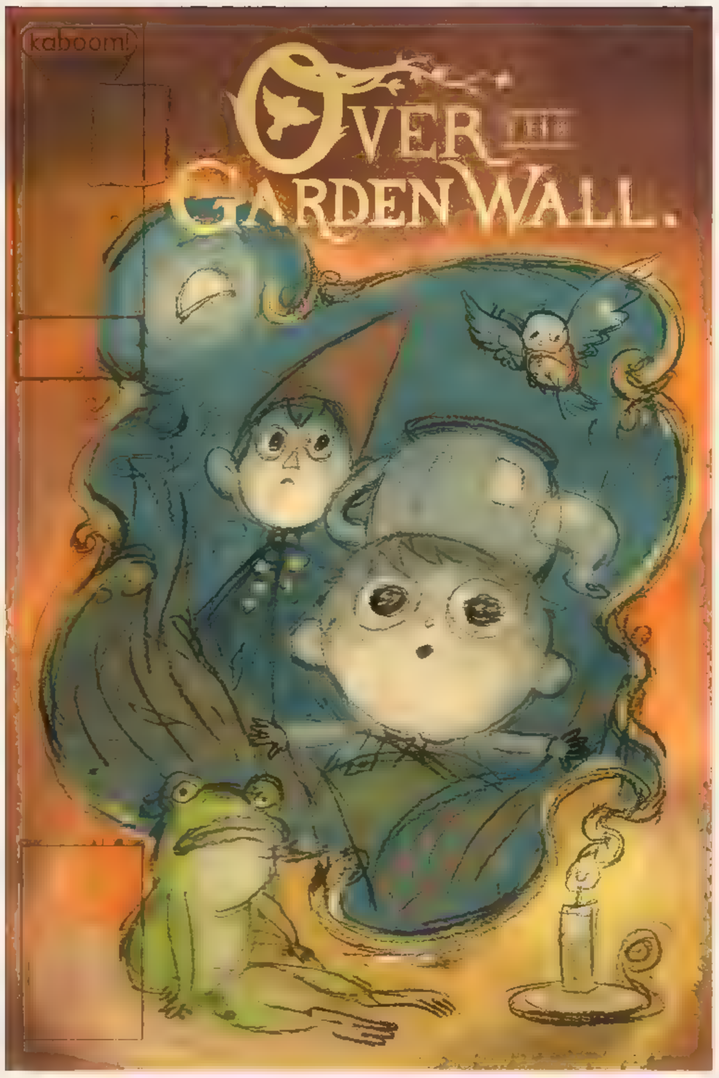
SWC: This is one of the labels for the record itself, simulating one of the glowing eyes of the dog that appears in the first episode of the show.



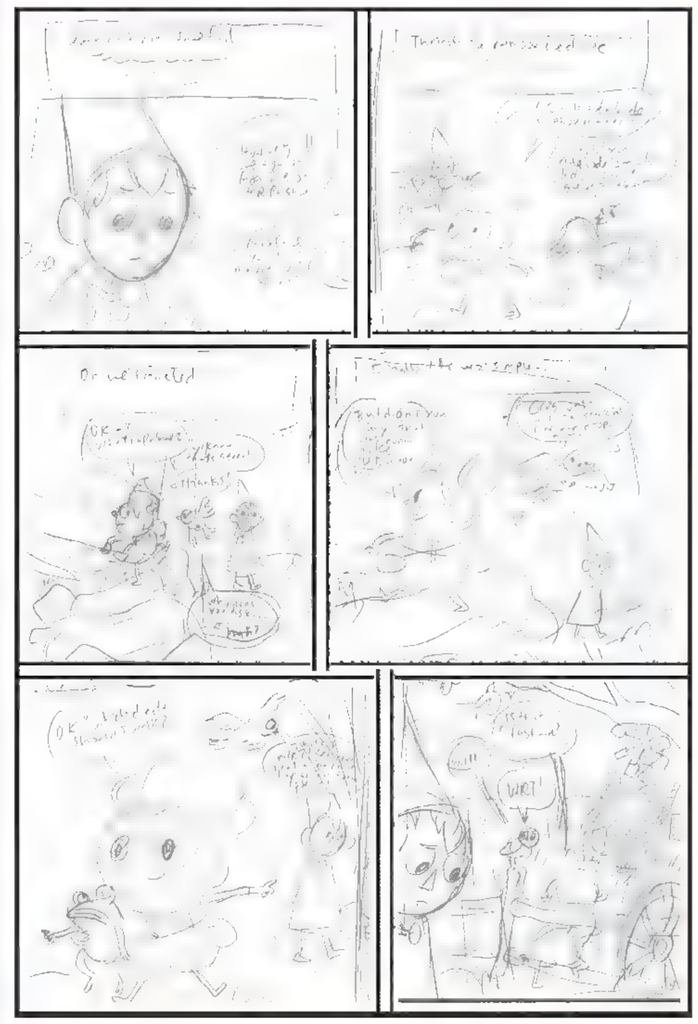
SWC: I made this pattern of hand-drawn autumn leaves layered on top of each other to create a forest-floor feel in the backgrounds of the album booklet.

SWC: More thumbnails for the interior spread of the album. We chose the dark scene. It was printed on matte black paper, and the silhouette of the Beast was printed in glossy black ink. This had the effect of making the Beast only barely visible where the light reflects off the page.

PM: I can't believe this tape got made. The contents of the tape were produced by the Blasting Company. It was meant to replicate the music and poetry Wirt is so embarrassed to have Sara hear in episode 9. It's full of soothing clarinet music (recorded using multiple tape recorders to create layered harmonies) and original poetry (including actual poems written as teenagers by members of the Blasting Company, me, and my high-school friend Vanessa Templeton). The wonderful Elijah Wood came on to provide Wirt's vocals for the tape, and even Collin Dean, the voice of Greg, makes an appearance when Greg hijacks the tape to read some of his own poetry!



Dang it, This is a terrible island
In some ways the Fiddle Dee Took like flowers once were. And for a brief moment I felt as though all the world made sense. Even the precariousness of our current situation
Wirt...
Huh?
Listen dirt, This is a skill we need to-
HLOK!
INCOMING enemy Rounds! We're surrounded!

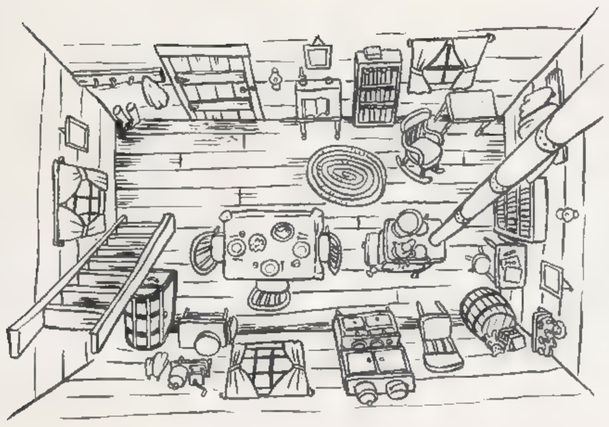


BOOM! COMICS

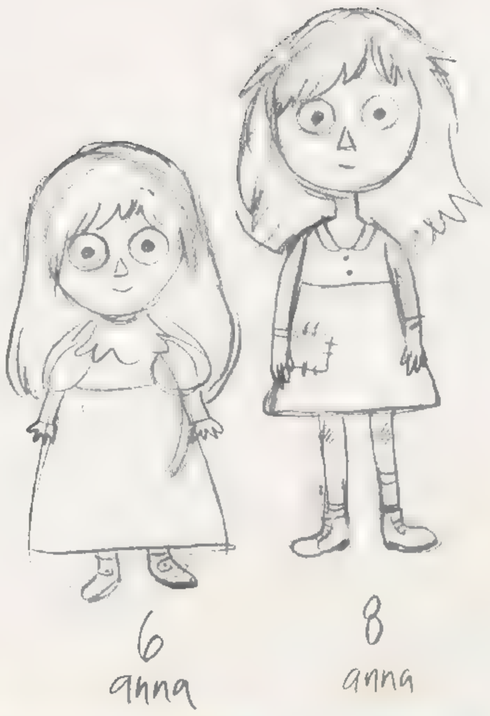
Coinciding with the November 2014 airing of the miniseries, Patrick McHale and storyboard artist Jim Campbell released a comic book special featuring one of McHale's unused episode ideas. The story invited Greg and Wirt aboard a land ship with a crew of "commonwealth" patriots attempting to wage a war on cows. That creative team reunited for an additional four issues the following August, joined by original staff writer Amalia Levari, who wrote the concluding chapter. Publisher BOOM! later launched an ongoing series with creators including Campbell and Levari, as well as artist Cara McGee.

Art: Jim Campbell, Levon Jihanian
Images courtesy of BOOM! Studios

Jim Campbell: These concept sketches and rough layouts are for the special first issue of the comic. The character designs for the sailors were inspired in part by nineteenth-century illustrator Edward Lear's drawings.



JC: The Woodsman's cabin and his daughter Anna appeared for only a very brief moment in the show. In Amalia Levari's story (issue 4 of the BOOM! miniseries), we not only see Anna grow up, but also meet her mother.



JC: These are alternate covers for issue #4 by Levon Jihanian (right), who was also a background artist on the show, and me (left). I sculpted this model (above) to use as reference for the Woodsman.

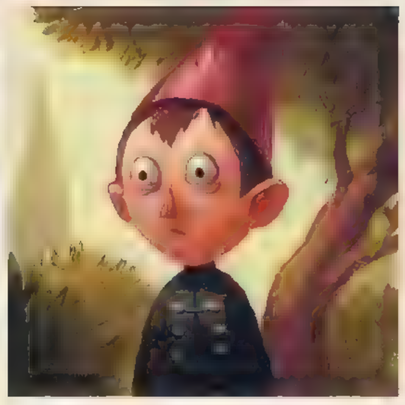
German Orozco

Adrienne Lee

Stacy Renfroe

Aaron Reiner

Vi-Dieu Nguyen



Levon Jihnian

Natasha Allegri

Natasha Allegri

CREW ART

After the miniseries wrapped production in September 2014, many of the storyboard and background artists climbed back into the Unknown to revisit Wirt, Greg, Beatrice, the Beast, and even Jason Funderburker through additional art.

Zac Gorman

OBJECTS

PM: Some of the items in the series were inspired by real-world objects. I believe the idea of using the stork scissors came from Amalia, but I also had a pair of my own that I bought in high school which I used to carry around in my pocket sometimes. The cape and hat combination was a look I put together while dreaming of creating a rock-and-roll alter ego for myself. I wore the hat and cape a couple times, just out and about, but I never ended up following through with that rock-and-roll plan. So the outfit was shelved for a while--until it seemed like a perfect outfit for Wirt.

Sketch: Patrick McHale
Photographs: Rick DeLucco

Photograph: Corey Booth

POST-IT BOARD

PM: Sometimes you do a really bad drawing, and it's so bad that it somehow makes you feel kind of good. We had an empty bulletin board in our office area, and I think at some point I started posting some of my worst sketches--or someone else posted my bad sketches, I'm not sure. But anyway, pretty soon the whole crew was posting terrible drawings. It grew and grew until we had a big, beautiful collection of bad Post-it drawings. It seemed like a nice contrast to the highfalutin miniseries we were trying to make.

goodbye...

VENTURE INTO THE UNKNOWN!

A COMPLETE TOUR through the development and production of the hit animated miniseries *Over the Garden Wall*, this volume contains hundreds of pieces of concept art and sketches, and a comprehensive look at the show's breathtaking production art. With commentary from creator Patrick McHale, art director Nick Cross, and more!

ART OF OVER THE GARDEN WALL™

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